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A LARGE ROOM

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MAGISTRO SOCIIS SCHOLARIBVS ALVMNIS

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VENIENTIS SPECVLVM ECCLESIÆ

PIGNVS AMORIS

DEDICO

A LARGE ROOM

A Plea for a more inclusive Christianity

BY

THE REV. S. C. CARPENTER, B.D.,

VICAR OF BOLTON,

Sometime Fellow and Tutor of Selwyn College, Cambridge

Author of *A Parson's Defence;*
Christianity according to S. Luke;
What mean ye by this service?

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BOMBAY, CALCUTTA AND MADRAS
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Nec conclusisti me in manibus inimici: statuisti in loco spatioso pedes meos.

Benedictus Dominus: quoniam mirificavit misericordiam suam mihi; in civitate munita.

Psalm xxxi, 9, 23.

Made in Great Britain.

PREFACE

THE Bishop of Manchester in the Manchester Diocesan Magazine for March, 1923, said that "the Church of England has always maintained two, perhaps three, schools of thought. . . . . Readers of von Hügel's great chapter on 'The Three Elements of Religion' in his work on *The Mystical Element in Religion* will not need to be reminded that these three schools appear not only in the Church of England but in every great Christian Church and indeed in all organizations of the higher religions of mankind. Health and sanity depend on the co-operation of these three. Perhaps a man of perfect wisdom and holiness could do justice to all three. Most of us are only able to be fully in sympathy with one or another—not with all. Consequently health and sanity depend in practice on mutual respect and toleration among representatives of the three types or elements."

I welcome the statement heartily, and I would gladly quote it without comment, to serve as a borrowed

and unauthorised introduction to my book. But one sentence in it might have the effect of making the book, to some readers, seem presumptuous. The admission, made by a man whose own sympathies and mental outlook are so wide, that a complete churchmanship demands perfect wisdom and holiness, makes me desire to add here a word of explanation of the main thesis of this book. I no more claim to have arrived at a complete churchmanship than I claim to understand the whole meaning of the Bible, the Apostles' Creed or my own Baptism. The book is an attempt to indicate the nature of complete churchmanship. The writing of it has assisted me, and I hope that the reading of it may assist others, to stake out larger claims than formerly seemed possible.

The book was practically finished before I left Cambridge in October, 1922. I have been tempted to alter a few expressions which would perhaps be more easily tolerated from a free lance at the University than from a grave parochial clergyman. But I thought it was more honest to let alone what I had said. Among many revisions and corrections I do not think that there are any which have been introduced merely for the sake of caution. There are a number of statements, especially about the Old Testament at the beginning of Chapter IX, which deserve a longer

treatment. But considerations of space made this impossible.

I do not know whether the book will be thought important enough to provoke much criticism. If any paragraph should give offence to any reader, I only ask that it may be read through again. A man is naturally prepared to stand by what he has said in print, but it hinders the cause for which the Church and the clergy exist when writers on religious subjects are criticised for what they have neither meant nor said.

The plan of the book is this. The first chapter suggests that we are apt to attach too much importance to preferences which arise from temperament or early associations, and not enough to considerations of truth. The next eight chapters deal with Catholic, Evangelical and Liberal Christianity. The space occupied by the first mentioned is the largest, because it comes first, and a number of things are said once for all under that head which could just as well have been said under either of the others. The remaining chapters deal with topics that belong to that large and rather less explored region of Christianity where the lines of party division are less conspicuous. It is perhaps hardly possible to deal with such topics as priesthood and sacraments and Bible criticism

without revealing what will seem to some a cloven hoof. There is more hope in treating of comparative religions, the relation of the Gospel to politics, and Christian Reunion, of being able to reveal the clumsy but honest feet of one who wishes only to be a Christian disciple.

It may be worth while to add that pronouns, relating to God the Father, to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit, are here printed, not with the capitals sometimes used, but as they appear in the Bible and in the Prayer Book.

S. C. CARPENTER.

BOLTON,
Easter, 1923.

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CHAPTER I

VARIETY AND TRUTH

WE are all agreed that religion can be analysed into the institutional, the mystical and the rational elements. The terms are scientifically accurate, but, when they are thus baldly repeated, they sound, as scientific terms are apt to do, abstract and barren. The religion in question being Christianity, it will be allowed that a warmer and more interesting statement, akin to the one quoted, but not identical with it, would be that a complete Christianity consists of Catholicism, Evangelicalism and Liberalism. It will be the purpose of the first half of this volume to examine in turn, in language as honest and untechnical as possible, these elements of Christian Churchmanship, and to suggest that we cannot afford to lack any one of them.

In theory this is not difficult to accept. But actually the principle of " one man, one label " and the practice of pigeon-holing, in office or memory, items of information about individuals, are so convenient that press and public almost universally adopt them. Did not the mystified reporter in the epilogue to *Fanny's First Play* clamour to be told the author's name ?

" Tell me who wrote the thing and I will soon produce my criticism. If it's Shaw, I shall know what to say." Thus Mr A. is regularly labelled " the well-known High Churchman," and Mr B. " a leader of the younger Modernists." A certain amount of labelling is pardonable. Most people have one dominant characteristic. And sometimes the bare single label is entirely adequate. Some of us have only one characteristic. Professions of loyalty to the Catholic Church and the historic Faith are sometimes arid and do sometimes shut the door on modern knowledge. Evangelical fervour may be individualistic, or irrational, or both. Appeals to the " comprehensiveness of the Church of England " may cover a desire for mere negation.

This littleness of some of us, combined with the mental laziness of the outside observer, has led to an under-estimation of the magnitude of Christianity. It has caused the part to be mistaken for the whole and the parts to be thought of as incompatible with one another. Just as D'Israeli, drawing attention in *Sybil* to the sharp line of cleavage which in the later thirties of the nineteenth century had divided the rich from the poor, spoke of " the two nations " which comprised the population of the country, so it has become the fashion of some in recent years to speak of the " three religions " which exist within the loose and elastic boundaries of the Church of England.

The division is crude, and too precise. I hope to

shew that the trinity is a trinity in unity. And yet, in a sense, if sharp divisions were to be adopted, it would be not precise enough. If anything like a complete manual of ecclesiastical zoology were in process of construction, we could hardly be content with only three. We should have to consider a great number of sub-divisions. There are, for example, Evangelicals who allow the criticism of the Pentateuch but not of the Gospels. In the jargon of the schools, they admit P but draw the line at Q. There are Anglo-Catholics who concede, and there are Anglo-Catholics who question, the right of the Bishop to control the use of additional devotions in the Parish Church. There are Liberals, who think that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is an indispensable part of Christianity, there are Liberals who think that belief in it is not essential for the clergy, and there are Liberals who find it impossible for themselves. A complete discussion would include all this, and more. But it remains true that the chief types are only three in number.

I hope, as I have said, to shew that they are really a unity, that it is possible and desirable to have the essentials of them all. I do not believe that the Church of England is really held together only by the Elizabethan Settlement, or by the Establishment, or by custom or conventions, or by mere unwillingness to awaken sleeping dogs. These things exist, and are not without their influence. But there is more than

that. If some event like disestablishment (with disendowment) came, and drove the members of the Church back towards first principles, or if some intellectual earthquake shook the whole foundations of religion, there would, no doubt, be some re-grouping. There would be movement to and fro, and fresh alliances. But there would still be the Church of England, shorn, possibly, of a few of its extremities and greatly invigorated by the shock of freedom gained or earthquake resisted, but, in spiritual essentials, much as before.

Meantime, the types exist, and will continue to exist. Why is it? There are two common ways of accounting for them? One is to ascribe the variety to temperament. We are told that some have the Catholic temperament, some the Puritan, some the critical and so on.

This is quite true, but it does not completely explain the situation. It does not go deep enough. Temperamental considerations may determine, so to speak, the shape and colour of our religious clothes, but not as a rule the actual nature of the food by which we live. There is another undoubted factor in the situation, namely, home training. I have always doubted the alleged boast of the Jesuits that if you give them a child until he is seven, they care not who has charge of him in after years. I think that the Jesuits have too much sense to be content with so small an opportunity. But if you lengthen the period to a reasonable

extent, there can be no doubt that all of us bear the mark of our early teaching, and some of us retain the actual teaching unimpaired to this day. Temperament and home training between them account for a good deal. Other less worthy factors, like fear or conventionality, do not need to be discussed, because no one would defend them.

But of those which must be seriously considered, the greatest has not yet been mentioned. Truth is more than temperament, more than early associations. Instinctive likings, boyish recollections, may often be confirmed, but they may also have to be corrected, by the Christian wisdom of the more experienced disciple. The only real justification for taking up a position, right, left, central, eclectic, discursive or comprehensive, is that you believe it to be true. All those who are conscious of distinct development in their religious views would claim that they have followed truth, and that their present position is the point to which the search for truth has led them. Most of them probably do not realise the extent to which they have been influenced by temperament and the various external causes, domestic and other, which may be summed up in the term environment, and how far from independent their thought has really been. But anyhow they have followed what seemed to them the true thing, and sometimes they have suffered loss for conscience sake.

Here, for example, is a not uncommon case, in which

natural inclination, reaction to environment, and independent thought are probably mixed in about the same proportion. A man, well-known to me, was brought up in a devout Christian household. He formed in childhood certain religious habits, which were renewed and strengthened by Confirmation. He was not as a boy particularly interested in theology, but he occasionally dipped into such theological books as he found lying about. They were mostly of what was then called the Broad Church School. Thus, he read a little of the writings of Dean Stanley, he learned that *Essays and Reviews* had made a great stir in the previous generation, and he formed a vague opinion that Bishop Colenso of Natal had been something of a hero. He never saw a chasuble or heard an extempore prayer until he went to College. At College he was drawn for a term or so into half-hearted association with a fervid but rather narrow group of Evangelicals, but he came to the conclusion that at their meetings they always said the same thing, and he presently dropped back into a sober Anglicanism. In the last year of his undergraduate life vocation to the ministry, hitherto a faint intermittent possibility, became a strong conviction. The motives were no doubt sufficient, but they now appear, as he looks back, diminutive, and it is certain that they were very considerably improved and supplemented in after years. He then began to read for the Theological Tripos, and thought for a time that this was the *ne plus ultra* of

theological education. During this period he once or twice saw Catholic ceremonial and disliked it very much. He then was fortunate enough to have a year in which he maintained himself by teaching for two hours a day, and spent the remainder of his time in recovering from the limitations of his University life and making a number of discoveries about the Church of England. Then, not of his own choice, but at the suggestion of a Bishop to whom he is for that and many other things a debtor, he went to Cuddesdon. There he learned the inadequacy of his former conception of personal religion, and was in fact converted. During his twenty years in Holy Orders, spent partly in working-class parishes and partly in the work of theological teaching, he never lost the sense of Evangelical religion acquired at Cuddesdon, he gradually became what is generally called a Liberal Catholic, and in recent years, without becoming, as he defines the term, less Catholic, he has become more Liberal. But his Liberalism does not now consist, as it did in his student days, of thinking how foolish are those who do not understand that the Fourth Gospel is much later than the others, but in trying to face facts and to understand the point of view of other people.

The experience is common-place enough. There are plenty of people who have developed a historical or social sense in their religion, who now find dignity and beauty in a type of Christian worship that they once distrusted and disliked, who now value the glowing

Evangelicalism of passages in the Bible or elsewhere which in their youth they always skipped, who are now content here and there with unresolved antinomies where they once were ignorantly certain. But such people, even apart from the sub-conscious impressions which psycho-analysis would perhaps reveal, are conditioned by their actually remembered past. They may easily be less devoted, they may easily be less efficient, than those whose history has been more simply evolutionary. But at least they are delivered from the particular kind of efficiency which proceeds from never having had more than one idea. And even though it cannot for a moment be denied that they have been greatly affected by various causes of which they were unconscious or only partly conscious at the time, they nevertheless believed, and believe, that they were following truth.

The methods of attaining religious truth are so lengthy and so complex that it is easy at any given moment to question the methods that are being adopted by another or to distrust your own. The essential mainspring is devotion to our Lord. Allied to that are the movements of reason, imagination, will, the social instinct, and various emotions. No one of them is by itself sufficient. Thus, the faith of the Catholic Church is a fine thing, but you must somehow make it your own. Feeling will help to appreciate the Cross, but feeling will not teach you to understand the Creed. Logic must never be contradicted, but must often be

transcended. The will to believe, and the happiness of believing, are frequent elements, but not indispensable and not the whole process. The simple efficiency-test of pragmatism needs to be applied over a large area of religion and a long period of time. To go with the stream is dangerous, but it is illuminating and enlarging. It gives coherence to an individual experience to find that what has happened to you happened also to people mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles or in the S.P.G. Report, or has happened to your neighbour yesterday. And on the whole the test is that of constructive value. "Men," said Creighton, "are generally right in what they affirm, and wrong in what they deny." This seems to lead to the somewhat excessive conclusion that everything is true, and therefore the more you can believe, the better. But it really only means that it is right to hold on to what seems positive, and to turn your critical swords, as far as possible, into co-operative ploughshares. The truth is much larger than the largest thing you know.

This is encouraging to one who believes that a Christian is not obliged to choose between being a Catholic, an Evangelical or a Liberal. After all, the truth of God is not likely to be less than threefold. But anyhow the search for it is the only thing that really matters. There are two signs of this. One is that belief in education is accepted as a virtue. It may be assumed without offensiveness (even though

there might be trouble over the application of the principle) that, of people generally, the better are those who believe in education, and the worse are those who do not. Belief in education is perfectly compatible with intense adherence to a certain form of religious faith, but it includes willingness to let your religion take its chance. If your religion is true, all will be well. And whatever is not true cannot and must not be bolstered up. The dying Goethe prayed, "More light, more light!" He may have meant, for all I know, that he would have liked to live a little longer, and to learn a little more. If so, it was a natural, pardonable, scholarly desire. But if he meant, "More light for everybody, even though it make them reject my philosophy and burn my books," it was superb, and he was a true child of our Father which is in Heaven. I must desire more light for everybody, and if the increased knowledge of the truth exposes my sophistries to the world and to myself, so much the better. Let God be true, and every man, including me, a liar. Truth is great, and I hope that it will prevail not only over my ignorance, but if necessary, over my reputation. It must increase, and if that can be secured, I am willing to decrease, or vanish altogether. But of course what I should like would be to increase with it.

The other sign is this. Among Christians, missionary zeal is accepted as a virtue. It may be assumed that the better Christians are those who possess it. Now,

the case for Missions is simply the case for what is believed to be the truth. It has indeed been to some extent re-stated. The old illustrations of the pit of destruction, the restraining fence with the pitiful gaps at point after point along the edge, the inadequate supply of watchmen to warn the perishing populations, which occurred, for example, in a very earnest book on South India published in 1903, have passed away. The methods induced by that kind of theology have happily been replaced by the still older, and really classical, method of Saint Paul at Athens, "What therefore ye ignorantly worship, that declare I unto you." But the standard is still that of truth. India is evangelized by Christians, because Christians believe that the Evangel is the truth of God. Among Christians, the very people who at home are sometimes disposed to over-press the temperamental argument, indignantly reject it when they are considering the non-Christian races. No Christian who cares for missions overseas will admit that the heathen people of the East must be left to their heathenism, because it was the faith of their fathers or because it suits their temperament and is the line of least resistance. Why not direct the same zeal, the same pastoral care, to the perpetual search which Christians must pursue for themselves? The need to decide what kind of Christian you are to be is hardly less important than the need to be a Christian. The first and great interrogation of the Gospel is, "What think ye of

Christ ? " But the second is like, namely this, " How do you propose to make him your own ? "

It is feeble for an adult person to hand himself over without reflection to the religion of either his emotions or his parents. If in your bones you are Puritan or anti-Puritan, traditionalist or modernist, you ought to make a special effort to understand the other side. If you are thankful for your youthful training, you ought to add to the philosophy of your family as much as you can entertain of the philosophy of the Church and of the world. Do not commit the unpardonable intellectual sin, which for those who have any intellectual capacity is also a grave moral sin. Do not say, " Never mind." The chief sin against the Holy Spirit of Truth is to say " There is no Holy Spirit of Truth." The Christ-devoted motive is the truth-loving motive. It already makes the best Christians vigorous for evangelizing work at home and overseas. Let us apply it to poke up our too placid acquiescence in the state of our half-converted, chaotic and divided Church of England. The maxim " Live and let live " is at its best the heroic slogan of one who is both aflame with passion and divinely tolerant. But too often it means little more than " Die and let die." Let it have always its best meaning. Let life, full life, eternal life thrill through the spiritual pulses of the Church. Let us view with calm judgment and generous charity the differences that lie on the surface. But the deeper you can penetrate, the nearer you will come to the

profound level at which Christians are one in Christ and Christianity is fulfilled. Some of the things which can be seen on the surface are interesting and in their way important. Some are depressing, some repellent. But a great many of the things seen are only temperamental. The things which are not seen are eternal.

CHAPTER II

THE ARGUMENT FROM HISTORY

IF it be granted that something of a case has been made out, in a preliminary way, for believing that Christianity has three vital elements, it will also be admitted that they must be considered in some sort of order. And herein Catholicism has a natural claim to be considered first. The Church, or some part of it, is the essential herald. No one can possibly begin the process which will eventually lead him to Christ and Christianity, except through the spoken or written word of someone else. And where the Christian evangelist is, there is the Church. A single evangelist may seem a very solitary, isolated figure. But he represents the Catholic Church. He may think himself that he represents only some much smaller thing. He may choose to dispense with part or most of his available resources. And in any case he cannot, as things are, have a complete authority behind him. By reason of the present distress, his voice must be the voice of Romanus or Anglicanus, or some other sectional officer with a limited certificate, but his message is part at least of the gigantic gospel for the sake of which *Ecclesia Sancta Catholica* is God's Ambassador to man.

The Catholic Church exists by the will of God. It is often supposed that once upon a time a few Christians, somehow existing independently, had the bright thought of turning themselves into a company, to wit, the Church. That famous occasion never occurred. The Church began on Lady Day, when God did not abhor the Virgin's womb, and Mary was the first Christian. It had begun in embryo centuries earlier, as the Jewish Church. But it began in fact on Lady Day; and again, when the first disciple followed Jesus: and again, when a vehement and headlong man exclaimed "Thou art the Christ": and again, when the dawn of Easter faith made the heart of a converted prostitute stand still for joy: and again, finally, at Pentecost.

It has had since then its moments. There was one in Jerusalem, when Stephen died, and on the Damascus road, when Saul was converted. There was one at Antioch, when the first Gentile was baptized, and another, some months later, when brethren in council anxiously debated a resolution of indemnity for the bold step which had really committed the Church to a more Catholic idea. There was a great moment when, persecution for the moment ended, three hundred bishops sat in council at Nicæa, and set their seal to the audacious formula which would safeguard redemption. It was a milestone when the first version of the Bible in Latin or in English or in any other tongue was made, when the first Christian altar was set up in

Britain, in America, in China, when Erasmus printed his Greek testament, when Augustine, Francis or John Wesley were baptized. All these were great occasions. But there has not been a second Pentecost.

In the earliest days, as soon as we have any strictly contemporary evidence, that is to say, in the Epistles of Saint Paul, before the believers had begun habitually to use the name "Christian," we find them being taught by Saint Paul, and apparently consenting without surprise or difficulty, to regard themselves as members of the mystical Body of Christ. Their belief was that the life of the ascended Jesus had been carried on by his Vicar or Paraclete or Spirit, and that they, the Church, were the Spirit-quickened, Spirit-bearing Body. They found, in the Body into which they had been baptized, that which we have learned in our day to call an "extension of the Incarnation." The Colossians, for example, learned to speak of "Christ in us, the hope of glory." This is Catholic doctrine about the Church. The Church is a divine creation, the Body of Christ, a thing which neither we nor our forefathers have made, but rather a thing which God has made and is making, which in turn has made and is making us.

All this is dogma of the profoundest sort. But in our day dogmatic theology is not popular. The argument from the existence of the Church, which, rightly handled, is an easy and persuasive opening of the case for Christianity, seems often to miss fire. The

reason is, as my own accidental choice of metaphor betrays, that the users have held it like a pistol at their friends' heads. How often has the layman writhed while the curate, like Mrs. Oliphant's Rev. Frank Wentworth of St. Roque's, Carlingford,[1] has begun his Easter sermon—Easter of all days in the year!—by drawing attention to the wisdom and mercy of the Church in providing the festival of Easter for the faithful.

Having suffered much, in person and vicariously, from this sort of thing, some of us, believing sincerely in the dogma and prepared, whenever it can be used without damage or unfairness, to use it to the full, are nevertheless disposed in general to employ what may be called the constructive method. The method is to take as little as possible for granted, to begin on the ground of admitted fact and common knowledge, and to attempt to climb from the known to the unknown.

Thus, desiring to commend the Catholic Church to the outsider or the imperfectly informed inhabitant, we point out that it is very old. Its sanctions have stood the trial of time. This is not by itself a sufficient testimonial. There is old china and old china. And some people would not like or value even the oldest and rarest of Minoan pottery. Some even are so constituted that they judge anything and everything with a prejudice in favour of whatever has not yet been tried. In the land of "words, words, words"

[1] In *The Perpetual Curate.*

the unwritten page is king. But human nature does not change very much. The ancient meat has not become the modern poison. *Vixere fortes.* Women had babies before Agamemnon, and the cave-dwellers had a family life. It was damp and draughty, but baby was suckled and Tommy was sent out to " fetch the errands." It was all much as it is in Bolton now. The best things in Bolton are as old as the hills. The worst are the by-products of modern civilisation.

And so the age of the Catholic Church, for all reasonable people, constitutes a *prima facie* case. Whoever can at all establish his claim to the use of the word " Catholic " has a link with the Church as it has been all the time.

The argument is independent of any particular theory of Apostolical succession. We need not rest upon the mathematical computation of the nineteenth century writer, who calculated that the chances of the validity of the consecration of a triply-consecrated Bishop were probably about 125,000,000 to 1, and at the very lowest about 8,000 to 1.[1] We do not now employ such methods, and it is cheerfully admitted that as far as ministerial succession is concerned there is a gap in our knowledge of the evidence. We can read what Saint Paul thought about the authority of Apostles and the importance of Sacraments, and we know that Ignatius at the beginning of the second century and

[1]Quoted by Henry Rogers (Edinburgh Review, April, 1843, reprinted in Essays, 1855, Vol. III, p. 21). The writer quoted was a very eminent person, not a clergyman.

Irenæus towards the end of it were stout episcopalians and sacramentalists. We know also that to be both these things has been a mark of Catholic religion ever since. About the shadowy and little known period between the death of Saint Paul and the time when the Episcopate is thought of as the essential back-bone of the Church we can only say that it was a period of growth, but not, it would appear, a period of strain or violent revolution. The Church developed everywhere without effort, almost without noticing its own action, the organs of Catholicism. "Though no one was at the time fully conscious of the full scope and significance of what was going on, yet the Church did develop from the Apostles, as from the centre of her being, these two organs [bishop and presbyters] for the discharge of the functions necessary to her life. The ministry grew in silence, and men found themselves in possession of it before they began to enquire into what it meant. The process was analogous to that by which a living organism, without being fully conscious of what it is doing, puts forth one by one the organs requisite for the performance of its vital functions."[1] The question of the rise of the Episcopate and of its relation to the original Apostolate belongs rather to technical studies in Church History than to a broad estimate of the general prestige of Catholicism. It is enough, in this connection, to say of the Episcopate, in the temperate words of Dr Sanday, that it is "a sound link in the

[1] H. F. Hamilton, *The People of God.* Vol. II, p. 171.

chain which binds us to the Great Church of the past."[1]

Anyhow, the facts required by the present argument are incontestable. The primitive Church grew into the Nicene Church. The Nicene Church grew into the Mediæval Church. The Mediæval Church fell into East and West in the eleventh century, and the West fell into South and North in the sixteenth. Catholicism was split and shaken, but it did not vanish altogether. The family name does not perish and the family inheritance does not cease to exist, when twin brothers abandon what has long been a rather fictitious co-operation, or a younger son removes, albeit with an unfilial roughness, his share of the plant and his knowledge of the process, and sets up in business for himself. The Catholic Church is linked to the Roman Empire as truly as Plato is to Socrates, and the Church of England is more truly, and much more obviously, linked to the Middle Ages than is the Throne or the House of Commons.

Outwardly, it hardly needs to be said that there is an immense difference between the Church as it is in England and the Church as it was on the Continent a thousand years ago under the double care of Leo III and the Emperor Charlemagne. But hardly more than there is between the ancient and modern methods of educating children or administering justice. It has

[1] *The Conception of Priesthood*, p. 99. The complete sentence, which I must quote for the sake of fairness, is—"They" (i.e. "most Nonconformist bodies") "might come in the end to reach hands to those of us who hold that although Episcopacy is not of divine right it is yet the normal order, a sound link," etc.

changed much less than have the fashions of waging war, healing the sick and transacting financial business. But even so it is admitted that outwardly the Church has suffered immense changes.

Inwardly, in the matter of the effect it has on the minds of men, the state of things seems utterly different. The status of the imperious Hildebrand does not contrast more sharply with that of his predecessors under the persecuting Emperors Domitian or Marcus Aurelius than mediæval Church authority contrasts with modern. There was a time when an Emperor stood barefoot in the courtyard of Canossa for three whole January days, awaiting audience and absolution from the offended Pope. Centuries earlier Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, rebuked the great Emperor Theodosius for his massacres at Thessalonika, and only absolved him eight months later, when he had done further penance and had promised for the future to delay the execution of every capital sentence for thirty days. In the twelfth century Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaulx, by the mere force of his acknowledged Christian character, exercised (in the words of Mr Frederic Harrison) " over a succession of popes, over two kings of France, an emperor of Germany, and a king of England, over the entire clergy and monkhood of France, a boundless personal ascendancy."

All that is ended, and it is no doubt a happy thing. In those days no person in Europe dreamed for a moment of questioning the entire right of the Church

to rule the whole of human thought and life. But this unquestioning obedience of the world tempted, and often caused, the Church to misuse its sanctions and to misconceive their nature. In the long swaying to and fro between the cause of Arius and the cause of Athanasius that followed the Council at Nicæa, the supposed impetus of persecution was borrowed by each side as it alternately secured the Imperial favour. Even the great Augustine, with all his supreme moral and intellectual authority, was not able to resist invoking the secular arm against the schismatic Donatists. The Dominicans arose out of zeal for orthodox theology. They began by extirpating heresy, but they verified their dreaded name of *Domini canes* in a new and sinister sense when they went on to extirpate heretics as well. The Inquisition is proverbial. Our own Henry IV, not feeling safe on his usurped throne, proceeded, as an obvious move in the game, to win over the Church by giving them the statute *de Heretico Comburendo*, with which to put an end once for all to Lollardism. There are hundreds of examples, or at least there have been. It is a happy thing that the Church now is not so tempted.

But in one respect the case is exactly as it was. The Church now, as then, exercises its spiritual authority over such persons as are disposed to accept it, and *over no one else*. The only difference is that in the Middle Ages there was no one else, and now there are a great many. After all, all spiritual sanctions depend

in the long run on popular acceptance. "A fig for religion" cries the enemy. "Priests invented it." "Who then invented the priests?" acutely asks Dr. Inge. No one can ever be excommunicated unless he believes in the excommunication. That is to say, men really excommunicate themselves. The discipline of a monastic order or of the Roman Church is more thorough and more conspicuous than the discipline of the Church of England as a whole. But everywhere the mandate of spiritual authority runs only within the province of its acceptance.

Of this authority much is due, as it was due in older days, to the fact that the Church comes out of the past. In the first century, as heathen writers testify, Imperial Rome itself was disposed to respect Judaism, partly because it was a confident religion, but more because it had a long history and venerable sacred books. The Catholic Church soon came to occupy all and more than all the ground that the Jews had covered. In the realm of ideas the powerful Gnostic movement, which offered Christianity the intellectual kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, was really defeated because the Church continued to assert that "This is not what we have been accustomed to believe or teach." Politically, the Emperor Constantine made terms with Christianity because it was too strong to be resisted. And he perceived this by arguing to the future from the past. His own father had been one of the subordinate Cæsars in the blood-stained age of

Diocletian, and he had seen himself the ineffectualness of the most searching and remorseless persecution. The institution which had stood such tests as that was the one for himself and his dynasty to patronise. After Constantine the authority of the Church grew greater every century. The origin of the mysterious power which could wield the thunders of the wrath of God was lost in antiquity. The very forged Decretals which asserted ancient grants of privilege that had never been made were *bona fide*. The motive of the invention was merely to supply copies of the evidence, which must somehow have perished, for transactions which no living person was disposed to doubt. Even the Church of England at this date, although some ignorant persons still believe that it began in the sixteenth century, although the temper of our time is not overwhelmingly conservative or *laudator temporis acti*, is everywhere recognised as a thing of ancient growth. It is of course as a matter of actual history older than Parliament or Monarchy or nation, older than anything in England except the soil and a few Druid monuments and Roman roads. And though not everyone knows this, and some, if they knew it, would be inadequately impressed by it, though the ignorant will still be ignorant for some time to come and the anti-conservatives will not at once recover their historical perspective, even among them the oldest person living can never say that he has heard from his great grandfather of a time when the Church

of England was not there. This makes it to the veriest tourist interesting, and, to those who are capable of receiving deep impressions, deeply impressive.

The appeal to antiquity is applied on various scales and in various degrees. Some mean by antiquity the classical period of the Apostles. Others appeal to the first three or first six centuries. Some count as Catholic whatever was believed and practised by the whole Church before the break between East and West in the eleventh century. Some would include whatever is pre-Reformation. Some, less Catholic, are content to fix their standards by the Reformation itself. And in actual fact a great many of those who call themselves, not Catholic indeed, but conservative, in religion, mean nothing more or less than the nineteenth century, the reign of Queen Victoria.

Appeals of this kind normally emerge only in controversy, when the legitimacy of some rite or doctrine is in question. But they are all capable of being used to establish the long standing of the Catholic religion. The arguments from the earliest centuries are used *simpliciter*. Baptism, for example, is ancient and therefore Catholic. The arguments from the Reformation period and from the later centuries are commonly used by Catholic Churchmen in a more subtle way. Thus, an institution which could survive the Reformation, the reigns of the Georges and the reign of Queen Victoria, and could then produce a Church, a Liddon, a Stanton, a Dolling, a Holland, and some who are now

living, must certainly be Catholic. But the appeals, as a rule controversial, or internally defensive, will also assist to make good the citadel against outside attack. They are not all equal and together they are not conclusive. There is justice in all of them, but not absolute conviction. It does not follow that just because the Church is old, therefore it is right, with no more said. To accept, for example, the ancient creed is a long business, involving not only appreciation of antiquity, but reason, will, affection, conscience, the whole personality. Till this has been done, the creed remains merely an external thing. It has no saving power. But it is, anyhow, an historical, imposing thing. The prestige of antiquity, which differs *toto cælo* from the mundane credit of State Establishment or social well-connectedness, is a thing which can be appreciated by any educated person. Anyone who understands the difference between a hundred and a thousand years of history—and that is, roughly, the definition of an educated person—can appreciate some at least of the moral forces of Catholicism.

Historic Catholicism is a thing to be reckoned with by anyone who would reform or remake or defy or wipe out Christianity in England. Thus, a man may hold strong views about the rightness of the Reformation or the necessity of having another very like it. But he must always remember that in England the Reformation was a compromise. It may be that the reformers robbed Peter to pay Paul, but they never

denied that Peter was an Apostle. Another man may hold that the Church is a back number, and that the only chance for Christianity is to have a tremendous revolution, and to start again. But no one will ever understand anything or do anything in England unless he allows for tradition. In England our Christian Bolshevik friend will make a mess of it, his revolution will be a failure, unless he is prepared to consider the value of continuity, unless he is prepared to go on more or less from the point at which he now stands. God does sometimes work *per saltum*. There are wars and earthquakes. There are Reformations, Evangelical revivals, John Wesleys, Oxford Movements, Girton Conferences. There have been, and by the grace of God there will be, revolutions. But the revolutions which are too abrupt, too deaf to history, too intolerant of fact, do not succeed.

We are all reformers now-a-days. No one would say that the theology or the morals or the churchmanship which was good enough for the Fathers, the Crusaders or the Schoolmen, was *ipsis verbis* good enough for him. But he will remember that those heroes of the past were great reformers in their day. Saint Paul, Origen, Athanasius, Aquinas, Francis, and Erasmus all tried untested ways and were suspected as revolutionaries. A modern Christian may well be, ought to be, in favour of certain changes in statement, and still more in practice, which some would describe as revolutionary. But he will think that they are akin in spirit to the

changes which were made, he will hope and believe that they are the actual changes which would be made to-day, by those prophets, whose tombs we have eventually built.

CHAPTER III

THE ARGUMENT FROM GEOGRAPHY

THE teaching of Geography in schools has improved out of all knowledge. In the nineties of last century we learned by heart long lists of rivers, capes and exports. We drew maps of China. We knew that the Chinese wore their cheek-bones high and their hair long behind. We knew the chief tributaries of the Yang-tse-Kiang. But the book told us nothing of the past history of China, its moral character and racial instincts, its future promise. In the next term we came back to Britain; and committed to memory the fact that shawls are made at Paisley. I remember joining in a universal shout of "marmalade," when the master asked twenty little boys to tell him the chief product of Dundee. That was indeed a golden shred of learning, a day of brilliant and humane endeavour to relate geographical education to the pleasures of the breakfast-table. But even on that day of days, when the class did Dundee, and we contributed our scrap of relevant and scientific truth, we learned nothing of its jute or its Cathedral, nor of its history in the Reformation period. Other points of far greater importance, points vital to education,

were totally omitted. Nobody even began to tell us about the difference that the island situation of Great Britain, at the north-west of Europe, distinct but not distant from the Continent, looking towards America, has made to British history.

Geography is now taught in its proper connections with physics, history, politics and ethics. I fear that the ethics are not always true. I do not think that the official account of the exploitation of South America is always accompanied by a disclosure of the real character of that robust, attractive, patriotic pirate, Francis Drake. It is not, I fear, clearly indicated that the hands which in the eighteenth century painted with red a large portion of the world were not always clean of blood or dirt themselves. The popular rhapsodies about the dimensions of the British Empire might well be qualified by more fearless enquiry into the real implications of the League of Nations. All the more reason for the suggestion which I now make. I do not see why the teaching of geography should not be brought into connection with religion. I said in the last chapter that an educated person is roughly one who understands the difference between a hundred and a thousand years of history. I will add a further test. He must also appreciate such contrasts as the following. The Nicene Creed is fourth century Greek-Asiatic Christian Platonism, the *Dies Iræ* is Mediæval Western Thanatophobia. The authors of the one desired to teach the proper application of the best

known philosophy to the Bible doctrine of Christ's Person, the promulgators of the other wished to instruct half-civilized Western Europeans how to prepare for death. Another contrast lies between the *Glories of Mary* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*. To understand the one involves some knowledge of Chivalry, of the mediæval worship of virginity, of the mediæval under-estimation of the completeness of our Lord's humanity, and of Southern European sentiment; the other is the epitome of Northern Puritanism and needs to be read with the Authorised Version of the Bible and the history of the Court and general policy of Charles II. Scores of contemporary contrasts, no less instructive, no less fundamental, can be appreciated by anyone who will take the trouble to read *The East and the West*, or *The International Review of Missions*, or to frequent some of the better Missionary Meetings. I do not see how anyone can expect to be a man of the world, or to read the daily paper with intelligence and profit, unless he understands these things.

Supposing that Geography were ever taught in this complete and humane way, Public School education would be a different thing. The Sixth Form Examination in Geography (the Sixth Form then would still be studying the subject, instead of having left it behind with pencil-boxes and dictation in the Lower Fourth) would be something like this :—

1. What do you know of Ghandi? Why was he put in prison? What will happen when he comes

out? What was the attitude of (*a*) the Indian Civil Servants, (*b*) the Government Chaplains, (*c*) the Missionaries towards his arrest?

2. "Dark and true and tender is the North." Discuss this statement.
3. On what grounds would an intending Missionary decide between the claims of Japan and Melanesia?
4. How has the history of (*a*) Korea (*b*) Ireland, been affected by their geographical positions? What are the chief obstacles to the development among the two populations of a full national life?
5. Give some account of Kenya colony. What are the chief products and manufactures? Examine the industrial situation, and the principles on which profits are divided.
6. "Oh East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Examine this statement in the light of "Kim" and "The Broken Road," and illustrate by reference to the policy of (*a*) Sir Valentine Chirol (*b*) the British Labour Party (*c*) Mrs. Besant.
7. What do you know of Geneva, Yap, Kikuyu, Lambeth, Prinkipo and Swanwick?
8. Indicate on the accompanying maps of Ireland and Lancashire the spheres of influence of (*a*) Rome (*b*) the Anglican communion and (*c*) the more rigid type of Protestant dissent.

N.B.—Candidates can obtain scarlet, pink and orange chalk from the presiding examiner.

The paper would furnish a good test of the education of a sixth form boy or girl, and, if the questions are legitimate, it is evident that the famous epigram—

Geography is about maps;
Biography is about chaps—

contains an interesting but fallacious distinction. Now that I think of it, we all learned a great deal of real geography from stamp-collecting. Why not promote, as an additional and most instructive study, the habit of collecting and classifying dogmas?

The excuse for the interpolation of these pædagogic visions is the desire to suggest that in spite of immense variety, in spite of racial, political and physical considerations, in spite of the effects of sin and climate, the Catholic Church is nevertheless world-wide. It is at least a reasonable suggestion that it is right to value Catholicism because it is broad-based upon the experience of millions of believers.

Human experience is not indeed the ultimate basis. Experience is like the beams and concrete which adapt the structure of a lighthouse to the essential rock. It does not mechanically follow that because the Church exists everywhere, therefore whatever it says is true. The lordly axiom *Securus judicat orbis terrarum* inspired Augustine to reject the inadequate one-sided Puritanism of the Donatists; it comforted Newman in abandoning what he believed to be an insular, state-tuned and Protestant religion; on a smaller scale, it is the motto of the present chapter

of this book. But it may be no more dignified and no more scientific than Mr Pickwick's policy at Eatanswill. It does not mean "The majority is right, and that, without further enquiry, is enough." It only means "there is a *prima facie* case."

There are two recognised ways in which the case can be set out. Roman apologists insist on the advantages of uniformity. The same teaching is heard from all pulpits. The faithful can pass from Rome to Donegal and from Donegal to Salford and from Salford to Popocatepetl, and find everywhere the same customs, the same language, even the same decorations on the wall. It is difficult for an Anglican, born, bred and very well contented in his Anglican estate, to appraise the real value of this. At times, and to a point, I envy it. But all things considered, I am of opinion that it is unnecessarily boring. In the very unlikely event of my ever becoming a Roman Catholic, I should have to be a Roman Catholic of the Gallican, Cisalpine sort. And if I attempted openly to make conditions, I should no doubt be disqualified.

The other way is to dwell not on the importance of Anglican variety or, on the larger scale, of non-Roman variety, as against Roman uniformity, but simply on the importance of variety. The only limitations which are indispensable are those imposed by the limits of Christianity. The variety includes, as one of its variants, the uniformity of Rome. No one who is not impervious to evidence and ignorant of the weight

of the argument from the *consensus gentium*, can deny that the massive scale of Catholic witness is impressive. Take first the Easterns and the Romans. They have been in constitutional separation since 1054. Spiritually and intellectually they have been apart much longer. There are important points on which they differ acutely. It is perhaps not too much to say that their whole approach to Christianity is different. But there is a vast area of faith and practice where they agree entirely. Add to them the Anglican Communion. It is much smaller. It is rejected by Rome and unfamiliar to the East.[1] But it contains great variety, and exists in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia. It speaks its own vernacular, and within that it has its cultured accent, its Bœotian *patois*, its jargon, its preciosity, its slang. It has its own emphasis; its own limitations. But, broadly, it teaches the same religion. Add to all that, the whole body of Non-conformists—less Catholic, less willing to be described as Catholic—with a marked difference of emphasis, with certain repudiations, but still insisting broadly on a great many of the same things. It is an enormous mass of testimony, which would be easier to handle if it were uniform enough to be stated on a half sheet of paper, but gains impressiveness from the outwardly diverse nature of its inner unity.

There is also a further more shadowy form of the

[1] For recent movements in the direction of closer *rapprochement* with the Churches of the East, see below, p. 211 ff.

same argument. It arises from what it is proposed to consider more in detail at a later stage, Comparative Religion. Briefly, it amounts to this. The adumbrations of Christian beliefs discernible in other religions, instead of being, as is sometimes thought, a burden for the Christian defender to bear as best he can, are in actual fact among the lights that lighten him on his Christian path. He is glad to know that all religions have priests and altars, or that the ancient Mexicans had a doctrine of Divine Incarnation, or that the Japanese are half way towards believing in the Communion of Saints. All such discoveries give him not less but greater confidence that his own faith is true.

What then is the degree of certainty to which the Christian is brought by all this mass of suffrage? It amounts in practice to something like this. A loyal churchman, anxious to be faithful, is perplexed about this or that. Pending the arrival of more certain personal conviction, he will accept for the time being the authority of the Church. Suppose, for example, that a Dean or a Churchwarden finds himself compelled to say, "I cannot make my own this or that article of the Creed"; or, "I cannot approve the emphasis which it is evident that the Church has always laid on Baptism, or intercession, or belief in judgment after death"; or, "My opinion of this or that book of the Bible is such that I cannot regard it as part of divine revelation." When anyone, a faithful member or perhaps an official of the Church, finds himself faced

by such perplexities as these, what must he do? What he must do is to recognise that he has the Church against him, to believe that he is probably wrong, to go on trying, and to hope that he will presently recover. The Church is most likely right, though he, for the moment, cannot see it. He is as a rule the more willing to admit this, because, if he has been in the habit of remembering his past conduct, examining his conscience, and listening to what it says, he has already found in a number of cases that the Church was right, and he, through ignorance, self-will, or some other personal defect or fault, was wrong. It may have been one of various kinds of error. His theological eyesight was astigmatic; his objection to confession was due to ignorance and pride; his Churchmanship was wooden or what not. But having experienced, on one ground or another, many previous convictions, he is the more ready on this occasion "to go quietly," when he is once more arrested, and to allow himself to be carried along by the faith of the Church.

This willingness must have its limits. "Conscience is king." There may come a time when conscience, a conscience not convicting him of fault, but driving him to independence, must issue an *ultimatum*. The man then—shall we call him unhappy, or elect for special, dangerous service?—must face the consequences. He need not expect, but he must be prepared for, the "bitter constraint and sad occasion" to turn his back on the Church of his fathers, indeed on the

whole Catholic Church of Christ, and to go out alone into the wilderness. It may come to that.

The willingness is also not always easy to have. The argument from diversity in unity was sound. It is a genuine reason for carrying on. But the counter-argument from schism and disunion is difficult to meet. It must be sorrowfully confessed that the Christian case is very seriously damaged by our unhappy state. The puzzled Christian would be far more reassured, the appeal to the outsider would be immeasurably stronger, if the witness were that of one visibly Catholic Church, and not of scattered, diverse and, to a large extent, mutually excluded and excluding schisms. All we can do is to remind ourselves, and others, that there is over a large part of the ground a *consensus* of all Christian people. And it happens that the things which the Bishops at Lambeth, both in 1888 and 1920, named as the four points of reunion, are in fact the most Catholic things. They are the Bible, the Creed, the Sacraments, and the Episcopate.[1]

[1]The actual words of the Report of the Lambeth Conference in 1888 were as follows :—

" That in the opinion of this Conference, the following Articles supply a basis on which approach may be by God's blessing made towards Home Reunion :—

" (*a*) The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New testaments, as ' Containing all things necessary for Salvation ' and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

" (*b*) The Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal Symbol ; and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

" (*c*) The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by him.

Think for the moment of the Creed. It is the supreme instance of this particular appeal. When the new Doctorate of Christian Geography has been established and has attained its proper fame, no better subject for a competing dissertation can be imagined

" (*d*) The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his Church."

The relevant words of the " appeal to all Christian people " issued in 1920 are :—

" VI. We believe that the visible unity of the Church will be found to involve the whole-hearted acceptance of :—

" The Holy Scriptures, as the record of God's revelation of Himself to man, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith ; and the Creed commonly called Nicene, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith, and either it or the Apostles' Creed as the Baptismal confession of belief :

" The divinely instituted sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion, as expressing for all the corporate life of the whole fellowship in and with Christ :

" A ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also the commission of Christ and the authority of the whole body.

" VII. May we not reasonably claim that the Episcopate is the one means of providing such a ministry ? It is not that we call in question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those Communions which do not possess the Episcopate. On the contrary we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace. But we submit that considerations alike of history and of present experience justify the claim which we make on behalf of the Episcopate. Moreover, we would urge that it is now and will prove to be in the future the best instrument for maintaining the unity and continuity of the Church. But we greatly desire that the office of a Bishop should be everywhere exercised in a representative and constitutional manner, and more truly express all that ought to be involved for the life of the Christian Family in the title of Father-in-God. Nay more, we eagerly look forward to the day when through its acceptance in a united Church we may all share in that grace which is pledged to the members of the whole body in the apostolic rite of the laying-on of hands, and in the joy and fellowship of a Eucharist in which as one Family we may together, without any doubtfulness of mind, offer to the one Lord our worship and service."

than the Nicene Creed. The democratic argument from general consent has no more convincing case. For, be it noted, decisions which are, in the technical language of theology, œcumenical, only become so when they are accepted by the whole Church. It was not the number of attendant Bishops or the range of their actual representation of the faithful, which has caused the Councils of Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon to rank as Œcumenical, that is General or Universal. The reason for the supreme authority of those Councils is simply that their decisions have been accepted by the Church. To our eyes to-day the Nicene Creed may look like something imposed upon us from above, by three hundred and eighteen bishops, by Athanasius, by a preacher in a pulpit. It is actually the rumbling of an immense popular movement. With the exception of one or two beliefs like those in monogamy and priesthood, it is probably the most democratic thing in the world. It is enormously more democratic than the machinery of political democracy present or past, anywhere. That is an affair of counting heads. It is perhaps the only way of actually conducting an election at any particular date, but it is most unsatisfactory. It does not need much history or much sense to know that the chance majority at any given time is extremely likely to be wrong. There are some who believe in real democracy, in the simple dogma that " you can fool some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time, but you can't

fool all the people all the time." The dogma is true, because on the whole the instincts of plain men are sound. Those who believe it desire earnestly to have in politics really democratic methods. But in religion they have them already. The Nicene Creed is the result of really democratic methods. It is what Christians generally, during many centuries and in all parts of the world, have felt (felt rather than thought) about their Master. It may conceivably be wrong, but it has the votes of millions who have lived and died in it, and millions who are living in it now.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARGUMENT FROM HUMAN NATURE

THE formula presented as the indispensable channel through which auto-suggestion will bring itself to bear on the improvement of character or health, must include the words " in every way." We are assured that it is rash to omit this, and that its inclusion will cover a multitude of defects in diagnosis. There is an older formula, which ends a catalogue, which may have been either long or short, with the words " and all my other sins, which I cannot now remember." The motive is the same, a desire to cover all the ground, known and unknown, a *bona fide* attempt to guard against natural infirmity.

The moral is the same as that which leaps from the old fairy tale of the three wishes. The irritable wood-cutter, as he gazed upon his wife with the black pudding at the end of her nose, and had only one wish left, was faced with a heart-rending alternative. And the profound moral is that the mere satisfaction of conscious and expressed desires is certain to be unsatisfactory. Desires are apt to be selfish and limited and ignorant. Most of the English barons in 1215 desired only to reduce their own chance of being incommoded by a

heartless and offensive king. They reduced it, but if that had been all, the Charter would not have been much good to us. Happily, the Charter embodied "principles capable of progressive interpretation." And so there is still a chance that the English people may rid themselves of oppression by the barons. Within all history, including the legend of the three wishes, and including the generally misunderstood episode of the Great Charter, there stands a mysterious but sure theodicy. "God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things." We feel inclined to pray for this, that or the other. But what we are taught to pray for is "our daily bread." There is no profounder sentence in the Prayer Book, even though its grammar has suffered in the interests of rhythm, than the one which says that God is "wont to give more than either we desire or deserve."

This is Catholicism. This it is to be children of the one Universal God and to believe in the one religion that is truly according to his mind. God is more Catholic than we. The Catholic religion is larger than any one of us either desires or deserves, or knows himself to need, or by himself could use. It is large enough to cover the whole life of all of us.

The word "Catholic" has an interesting history. From the very beginning it means "universal." Ignatius, that great preacher of Christian unity as a thing of divine command, maintained by faithful adherence to the Bishop, is the first to use it about

110 A.D. "Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." A generation later the Church of Smyrna sends a circular letter, describing the martyrdom of Bishop Polycarp, "to all the parishes of the Holy and Catholic Church in every place." From this time the word becomes common. It always means "universal," and whenever it has any controversial implication, it always suggests that whereas the heretics are fragmentary and one-sided, and either have reached or are heading straight for actual separation, the Church has maintained the true succession and the unimpaired tradition. Thus, we read in the anti-Gnostic writings of Irenæus at the end of the second century that the true faith is guaranteed by the line of Catholic bishops, and in the Muratorian Fragment of the same date that certain pseudo-Pauline epistles to the Laodiceans and the Alexandrians, forged in the support of the heresy of Marcion, "cannot be received in the Catholic Church."[1]

[1]Swete notes the curious absence of the word from the earlier Roman Creed. It "does not appear in a western Creed before the latter part of the fifth century, and probably never made its way into the true Creed of the Roman Church; when adopted in Gaul, it was doubtless an importation from the East where its use was at this time almost universal. The absence from the Roman Creed of so ancient and widespread a term may possibly have been due to the comparative independence of the great mother church of the West. She did not feel herself in need of the support which the scattered Churches of the East derived from the solidarity of the Christian brotherhood. It may be suspected that Rome was never in hearty sympathy with the idea of the Church's catholicity; when she borrowed the word, it was narrowed in her use of it into a sense alien to that which it had borne on the lips of the first teachers of the Faith." *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 74.

A classical exposition of the term is that of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem about 370; he says:—

> "The Church is called Catholic, because it is throughout the world; and because it teaches universally and completely all the doctrines which ought to come to man's knowledge, concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly; and because it subjugates in order to godliness every class of man, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because it universally treats and heals every sort of sins which are committed by soul or body, and possesses in itself every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and includes every kind of spiritual gift."

All this seems to be, and indeed is, about the Catholic Church. But it is never right to consider the Catholic Church in isolation. Ecclesiasticism, or thinking of the Church as the efficient cause and the sufficient end, is sinful. Catholic theologians, beginning with Saint Paul and the fourth Evangelist, and then from Irenæus to Hooker, and from Hooker to Bishop Gore, have always derived their theory of the Church from their theory of "the Catholic Man,"[1] Jesus Christ. The only reason why the Catholic Church is such, and can convey such gifts, as they describe, is that it is the Body of Christ, and conveys to men what Christ has to give. I suggest then an examination of what Catholic

[1] Gore, *Bampton Lectures*, p. 168.

Christianity, that is, a full doctrine of Christ and the Church, has to say about human nature and its Christian possibilities.

Here are a few of the things which seem to follow from the belief taught by Cyril to his people at Jerusalem. We all believe vaguely, and should like to have a sure ground for believing, in the worth and dignity of human nature. The trouble is that the evidence is intermittent and conflicting. The characters of our friends, and also of ourselves, are probably either excellent in parts or excellent from certain points of view. Thus, Esau is, for the moment, most attractive. But he does not wear well. The eternal school-boy is tiresome at the age of fifty. Jacob, the other type, has several unpleasant habits, but he responds to the hard discipline of the divine handling, and he develops into Israel. To put it in another way, there are some who are good at the Commandments, and some to whom the Beatitudes appeal with such a natural attraction that it is not difficult for them to be peace-makers or poor in spirit. But they are not always the same people. The *naif* petition of the child that God would make all the bad people good and all the good people nice is not yet wholly unneeded. In fact, the existence of thoroughly worthless people, like the idle rich, or the idle poor, of intensely wicked people, like the proud, seducers, tyrants, profiteers, ring-making financiers, poisoners of the mind, ill-natured gossipers and those who use a strong personality to cow and paralyse their neigh-

bours, and of hopelessly weak people, like two-thirds of the prison-population at any given moment—the existence of such persons is a problem for the cheery optimist. Add to the ingredients already noted a good dose of self-examination, and faith in humanity will not seem a very obvious or a very easy thing.

How shall it be supported? By reference to sociological statistics, or to an Ideal once incarnate and thereafter universally available? There are various non-theological grounds on which it has been asserted that it is reasonable to believe in human nature. As far as I have been able to test them, they all break down sooner or later. The statistics do not really prove the point; the worship of humanity is seen to be idolatrous after all. Humanity has its virtues, but, humanly speaking, it cannot be maintained that it is so super-human as the humanitarians do vainly talk. It is the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation which supplies you with the real reason for faith. The Brother who loved to call himself the Son of Man, who somehow always seems to be both man and woman, Jew and Gentile, ancient and modern, old and young at the same time, is himself the embodiment of God. Man is divine, not because manhood and divinity are identical, but because they have been joined. Man is divine, but it is by grace and not by nature. God and humanity are *homoousioi* in the Modernist sense, because Christ is *homoousios* with the Father in the Nicene sense.

But if the appeal to statistics is disappointing, even the religious doctrine seems to be exposed to all the force of the argument from human imperfection, as stated, for example, in the last paragraph but one. But let us do justice to the doctrine. It never asserted that, when our Lord came into the world, all men were saved outright. In fact the Bible asserts something very different. "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin." Our Lord was betrayed and given up into the hands of wicked men, and suffered death upon the Cross. When he was crucified, the sky was darkened. Good Friday is a fast-day every year. The doctrine of the Incarnation is not quite so simple as was perhaps supposed. Before it can affect us, it has to be applied. And it is applied through the Cross, and through repentance and believing. In fact, it has the closest possible relation to our sins. To the worship of ourselves or one another our sins do really constitute an obstacle. At all events they will have to be explained. But it seems that our sins are somehow part of the doctrine of the Incarnation. They are not obstacles there. They do not need to be explained. The Incarnation knows all about them and takes count of them. They are perhaps not the whole, but a large part of its *raison d'être*.[1] The child-like belief of the

[1]The controversy hinted at in this sentence is that which began in the thirteenth century, between the Thomists and the Scotists. See Westcott's Essay, *The Gospel of Creation*, in his *Epistles of St. John*.

humanitarian in the essential goodness of his fellow-creatures is liable to be upset by experience. It is a nursery faith. It will be shaken at School, and destroyed at College. The mystical basis of belief in the Incarnation may not be true, but at least it covers all the facts, it is not dismayed by any of them. Moreover, your sentimental plea, based only on humanitarian considerations, will be hard put to it to contend against the logic of the anti-human exploiter, who denies your plea altogether. On these grounds he will beat you every time. In fact he has beaten you. Society has obviously not been able to avoid being almost totally defeated by his machine guns, bombs and tanks. Society is actually organised on his principles. But your mystical, religious plea is a thing against which his weapons do not avail. He can hate you, and imprison you, and crucify you. But he cannot prevent your resurrection, nor the birth of the Church of which your martyr-blood will be the seed. Your patient silence on your cross will only reiterate the dogma that it was by that very means that God proved the value and the salvability of the whole human race. "Father forgive them, for they know what they do" is far more than the equivalent of "Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner." That is a cheap fiction and, I should imagine, of non-Christian origin. The Cross of Jesus is the only throne on which both mercy and truth are met together, both righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Christ did not close his eyes

to anything but neither did he close his love or hope or faith to anyone. He is the only Person in the world who knew all and yet did not despair.

The Catholic Faith then is an honest thing, and is not embarrassed by any of the evidence. Its Gospel is not that men are "Christs," but that Christ is God made man, and that all men are Christ-capacious, capable of being Christened. And it brings to bear what, if it exists at all, is confessedly a supreme motive. It grounds its democratic faith on Revelation.

The Catholic Faith in its teaching about man is supported by modern knowledge. The inspired psychology of the primitive and mediæval church and of the Prayer-book, based as it is on the revelation of one who, if any ever did, knew what was in man, and on the indwelling of that Spirit of Christ, who is himself the inner secret of the spiritual life of man, is now being justified afresh. The Faith used to be accused by Positivists of selfishness, by Nietschians of unselfishness. by Hedonists of celibacy, and by Malthusians of matrimoniousness. But now we are told that there are three basal instincts, self, the herd, and sex. The Church knew this all the time.

About the first two instincts, it is not difficult to shew that the Church was right. It struck, not the right balance—that is not the word—but the right way of blending in a harmonious spiritual co-operation the individual and social claims. The Church always said that every individual was precious in the sight of

God, and therefore that every individual must count as one. It mattered very much indeed what every individual did or said or even thought; because we were all made in God's image; Christ had for ever sanctified our nature; Christ died for us: we were not our own; we were bought with a price. The value of the one lost sheep is stated in terms of the most unworldly and extravagant spiritual finance. Hardly less wonderful, the stumblers who had not yet quite lost their way but knew that they were anything but divine, were told that "Christ is yourself, only perfect." Reformers, held up by the apathy of slum populations, unable to induce them to rebel or pray or vote or even to take in the Parish Magazine, were reminded that these their neighbours were really the raw material of divine redemption.

And yet the social instinct was not denied. With all this unqualified insistence on the indispensability of every individual and the royal vocation that only awaited his consent, it was never forgotten that man cannot live alone. He finds his perfection, his goodness, nay his very manhood, in society, in service, in the work of taking and maintaining the right relations with the others. Some of our intellectuals press the value of the social instinct very hard. The late Dr Stanton Coit would have had a Church, a Church of England, even an Established Church, without any "Christianity" at all. Professor Royce, more Christian, would have a Christian Church, "the beloved

community," but without what Christians mean by Christ. And there are not a few philosophers, who are prepared to welcome the idea of divine Incarnation, yet shrink from what seems to them a narrowing down, a confining of divinity to one manifestation. They think that divine Incarnation must be impersonal and universal. And all the time, if they did but know it, there is Saint Paul, proclaiming to the ancient Ephesians and to the modern world, that the doctrine of the Incarnation includes two positions. The first is that you must begin with Christ, because he is the ground and warrant of man's vocation to become divine. But the second point of the Pauline doctrine of the Church is that if you so begin, there is infinite room for others. They are the Body, and the Body is being built up all the time. Christ actually finds his completion, as more and more members take their place within the growing life. To the individual, about himself, our Lord said, and the Church has always repeated, that you had to lose yourself for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. But if you did, what you would find was not extinction, or impersonal survival in the gain of posterity, but your own regenerated self. And to the same individual, about the impossibility of self-realisation in some private hole and corner, our Lord said, and the Church has always repeated, that the essential virtue is love.

This seems the best place in which to mention an unpopular but essential part of the Catholic religion,

an institution by means of which the Church provides at once for the individual and the social instinct, the institution of confession and absolution. It is the simple fact that the souls of men are sometimes stirred, and should be stirred much more frequently, to a profound conviction of sin. It is also a fact that sinfulness does impair the body of which the sinner is a member. If therefore, there is a remedy which can at the same time relieve the spiritual distress of the individual and restore him to the fellowship which he has strained or lost, it ought to be used. The Church has such a remedy. Its use in the Church of England has been expressly made optional. It may not be enforced upon any. But where a man's conscience is clear in the matter, there is of course no question of an option. A priest who has himself experienced the value of the discipline of confession and the happiness of absolution received, cannot do otherwise than add to the teaching of the Church his own testimony. A layman who feels that he has sinned against God and against the brotherhood, who desires such a bestowed assurance of forgiveness as will confirm in the particular instance his reliance on the general promises of God and apply the grace of the Cross to his own personal need, and moreover believes that the commission given to priests at their ordination is a fact, cannot do otherwise than use the means which is provided. Confession is now in our Church, as it is in the Enquiry Room of the Wesleyan or the undenominational Mission,

always secret or auricular. This is because the ancient practice of confessing sins aloud before the whole congregation was found too difficult for the penitent and not edifying to the congregation. But a real part of the function of the absolving priest is to receive the erring member back into the common fellowship. The priest is the ambassador of God, and also the representative of the people. The absolution heals the wound both of the individual and of the body politic.

About the third instinct, that of sex, in view of the " erroneous and strange doctrine " that we hear now-a-days and the complacency of some of the apostles of the new light, it seems worth while to put into blunt *oratio recta* some of the things that the Church has had to say.

It has said this—" Most of you have the vocation to be fruitful and multiply. And, thank God, that is what has generally happened. Some of you say that you cannot afford to marry. If that is false, it means that you have forgotten what I told you about the sufficiency of daily bread. If it is true, it means that the others have forgotten what I told them about brotherhood, and bearing one another's burdens. But for some there is a different vocation, high and difficult. The supreme thing to be remembered there is that there must be no mutilation. That would spoil all. There is no place in my commonwealth either for

eunuchs, or for bachelors, male or female, who live for luxury alone. You must use all your faculties. If you have this vocation, you will find in the work of prayer or healing or education or art or letters and, above all, in the work of loving such as are unloved or unlovely or unloving, a creative outlet for the force within you. So shall you too have many spiritual children of your body, who shall rise up and call you blessed." This is what the Church has always said. Does it not hold the real antidote to the worst versions of modern non-Christian teaching about sex? Is it not stronger and sounder than the best?

The Church is in fact a specialist on man. It knew his father and his grandfather. It has all the ripe wisdom of the family physician, and is equipped to deal with man all day and every day, and especially at the critical moments of his career. We are a queer family, including many of what the advertisements call "delicate and backward children." The children of God and Mother Church are a jumble of paradox and contradiction, difficult to analyse or classify. But some things in us seem to be structural and characteristic. It is clear that we are egoistic, sexual, domestic, moral, social, intellectual, athletic, artistic, political and mystical. And all the time Father is working to earn a living for the family and to maintain the farm. And Mother Church, in store-room or in medicine chest, has enough for all the needs of all the children.

But man is not the only object in the picture. There is another part of Nature to be reckoned with. This must be matter for another chapter. It will suffice here to indicate the connection. As a citizen of two worlds, a child of God and also having much in common with earth and the animal creation, man can express his spiritual message, and can himself be spiritually reached, by means of material things. The world we live in and the bodies of which we are outwardly composed are holy and therefore are not to be defiled or even treated as unclean. The action of kneeling and the religious use of consecrated bread are not mere concessions to the infirmity of some. They are examples of the working of a universal principle.

CHAPTER V

THE ARGUMENT FROM SACRAMENTS

ANYTHING, a belief, a custom, or an argument which claims to be Catholic must be reasonably historical. But there is good authority for declining to limit the reference of the word " historical " to that which is past. Such terms as " historical " (and " Catholic ") may fairly be used of things present in so far as they have their roots in days of respectable antiquity, and they may be used of things to come in so far as they are envisaged on lines reasonably continuous with those of the past and of the present. They may even be used of things ideal if the ideal is held honestly, and if the imperfection of its present and past execution is honestly admitted. Thus, Catholic worship in its perfection is a thing that I for one have never seen, perhaps even " a light that never was on land or sea." Just as the Catholic Church is still waiting to be perfectly incarnated, and the Catholic faith to be perfectly expressed, so Catholic worship is a thing that we have not yet learned perfectly to offer. It is a thing which all Christians should desire and try to offer. Nevertheless we do not yet quite know what it is.

Ideally, worship is offered by the whole of humanity in unison with the worship of the departed and of the angels, and together with the worship, whether it be conscious or unconscious, of Nature. It is offered in such a way as to call out the whole sum total of our faculties, physical, æsthetic, intellectual, moral, spiritual (to which list add, if you like, psychical and whatever other relevant faculties we have). Above all, if it be Christian worship, it is offered *per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum.* That is to say it utilises, as far as human action can, the whole of what our Lord has effected and effects for us; it goes up to God in the whole strength, completely realised, of his Incarnation, his life of brotherhood and service, his Death, his Resurrection, his Ascension and heavenly priesthood. It transubstantiates human bodies, those beggarly elements which constitute on the outward side the sons of earth, the children of time, into the heavenlies, into the kingdom of Eternal Love, where the pure in heart see God. That is Catholic worship ideally, and it is therefore not surprising that it should be described as a thing which we have not yet learned to offer.

Actually, in what was done last Sunday morning in the Parish Church, or in what I myself, or any of us, will be found doing on next Sunday morning, there is much to criticise. The only unqualified positive statement that it seems possible to make is that the Catholic Church is right in assigning the leading place among its devotional activities to a kind of worship that is

sacramental[1] even to the point of being materialistic and is also, by consequence, sacerdotal.

Let us examine these two terms, in the reverse order. What is the *rationale* of sacerdotalism ? I seem myself to have lost a little of the breezy, youthful, ignorant confidence with which I once discussed, in " A Parson's Defence," the case for the Church of England clergyman. But having said this I must be allowed to add that the beginnings (are they discernible ?) of that distaste for temerarious statement which comes with middle life, have only strengthened some real convictions about the constitution of the Catholic Church and about a personal vocation. With this proviso, let me confess an increased appreciation of the dangers inherent in all priesthoods, all ministries. They are tempted to suppose that they exist for their own sake, and that public worship is almost the whole of Christianity : and they encourage, by their existence,

[1] I hope it is clear that I do not mean to exclude non-sacramental and non-sacerdotal modes of worship, whether they would be at once classed as " Catholic " or not. There can be no objection in principle to choir-offices, litanies, hymns, processions, extempore prayer by minister or lay person, the saying, singing or otherwise exclaiming " Amen," " Alleluia," " And with thy spirit " or any other Christian response. Nevertheless, all worship which is not actually sacramental seems to me to be rightly regarded as either the private or the supplementary worship of sacramentalists. And as to sacerdotalism, I have used above the phrase " by consequence." This means that the priestly status or " character " of the minister who serves me is one of my warrants of the sufficiency of the sacrament which I receive. I am not prepared to dogmatize about the degree of sufficiency which belongs to sacraments ministered otherwise. This statement will perhaps explain the claim made on p. 70 that the greater part of the present chapter is " independent " of questions of ecclesiastical order. The whole subject is discussed more fully in chapter xiii.

not by their fault, the acceptance of two standards of both belief and conduct. Let me also confess to a more critical estimate of the actual profession, the honest, well-meaning, devoted, bourgeois, complacent, ill-used, much liked and not very conspicuously effective profession to which I have the honour to belong.

It would not be very far wrong to say that a priesthood is a necessary evil. The evil lies in the dangers just referred to. The necessity is, historically, the fact that all religions have had ministers, and, in particular, Catholicism has had priests, and, philosophically, the fact that ministerial organs are essential for a body. The Catholic tradition is that only the commissioned minister may hand the sacraments to the people,[1] and the voice of experience adds that the condition is a proper one. I am not without hope that with the spread of knowledge about vocation, a larger field of selection, better preliminary training, better after-training (in Staff Colleges), and (in the Church of England) better understanding and utilisation of the new Soviet system as set up by The Church

[1]There are (*a*) some large and (*b*) some trifling exceptions to this rule. (*a*) Lay Baptism is valid. In marriage the man and woman are themselves the ministers. The priest only solemnizes their marriage. (*b*) In times of persecution "confessors" were sometimes considered to have received presbyteral orders and deacons occasionally were authorised by a special permission from the Bishop to hear the confessions of dying penitents, to reconcile them by imposition of hands and to communicate them. See F. E. Brightman in Essays on the Early History of the Church and Ministry (ed. Swete) p. 398. But this does not affect the principle referred to in the text, which I think no one denies. The cases under (*a*) are thoroughly well-known. Those noted under (*b*) obviously pre-suppose the existence of a normal rule.

of England Assembly (Powers) Act, 1919, the priesthood will be more obviously necessary and less actually evil than it is now.

I will only employ one argument in its favour. The doctrine of priesthood is thought to mean that a few men are selected and set above the others. But this is neither the fact nor the ideal. The ideal is that every young Churchman should feel himself bound to discover whether or not he happens to have that particular vocation. And the fact is that, if he has that vocation and obeys it, he will be set, not above, but below, the others. To wait at table, or to be a bath-attendant, is the function (honest and honourable, but subordinate) of a servant. To fetch and carry, even if it be from heaven, is postman's work, or transport labour. To read aloud is what the paid companion does to the old lady. To keep on continually reminding persons who would otherwise forget their duties is what nurse does for the children. To go round knocking at the doors of houses and asking the people inside to give something, even if it be to God and not to the asker, is very like being a tramp. The explanation of the fact that God does drive some men into this difficult, laborious and dangerous trade is somewhere in the nature of Christianity and in the constitution of mankind. The real meaning of priesthood is that any man, however frail and fallible, may be called by vocation and order to receive a spiritual "character," which gives him till death an essential place in the work of

dispensing the divine *largesse.* Priests often fail in distinguishing between the right and the wrong sort of pride. But they are less tempted to the wrong sort of it than the prophet or the prince. A high doctrine of priesthood is a compliment to the whole human race.

But the real thing, the thing for which priests ultimately exist, is the use of sacraments. This appears to me necessary. Not evil at all, though of course dangerous, as truth must always be. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The historical point need not be laboured. It is certain that in the early days of Christianity, the converts of the period, certainly the Gentile, and, to some extent the Jew, would not have understood or accepted a non-sacramental faith. "The Christian religion," says Harnack, "was intelligible and impressive owing to the fact that it offered men sacraments . . . . Every hand that was stretched out for religion, tried to grasp it in a sacramental form." Nor was this mere externalism, spiritual laziness. The same writer points out that "the two most sublime spiritualists of the Church, namely John and Origen, were the two most profound exponents of the mysteries."[1] I know of course that a precisely opposite view is occasionally taken of the Fourth Evangelist, that he was a completely non-sacramental mystic, who, offended by the mechanical sacramentalism of his

[1] *Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries,* I, pp. 286-7.

contemporaries, desired to substitute for it a non-sacramental "Quakerism." But I do not believe that this is true. Anyhow, in spite of some difference of opinion about the Fourth Gospel, it will not be denied that early Christian worship was dominantly sacramental, that Justin's photographic description, penned for heathen readers, of the Christian worship of the middle of the second century, the imaginary picture in the second volume of *Marius the Epicurean*, the mediæval liturgies, Eastern and Western, and the Book of Common Prayer, represent local, temporary or national variations of one central consistent theme.

But this does not prove the case for to-day. With the Puritan objection that sacraments are legal and unethical I hope to deal in its own connection in a later chapter. But there are other objections which come from intellectualist quarters. It is suggested with some confidence in certain circles that sacraments are like diagrams on the black-board, suitable, indeed essential at a certain stage of education, but thereafter to be left behind. I reply that they are on that account no more to be left behind than language is to be left behind. And if it be rejoined that in some of the supreme moments of life language *is* left behind, *is* found in experience to be inadequate, I counter-claim that, even so, sacraments are in fact more akin to those means of expression which do at such moments supersede language, namely, music, silence, movements and actions of the body, than they are to language itself.

The great thing to be said in defence of Christian sacraments is that they are Christian. The Eucharist is four things. It is (1) our Lord's own method of perpetuating his presence, that human presence upon earth which began at Bethlehem; (2), it was given and is forever to be used in the closest possible connection with his Passion—the body broken, broken in death upon the Cross, the blood shed, shed in death upon the Cross; (3), it re-presents day by day a sacrifice which was accepted, crowned, made potent and effectual, sacramental and grace-conferring, by the fact of the Resurrection; finally (4), it is a living way of approach to God by virtue of its divine background, its eternal *raison d'être* in his Ascension and High Priesthood. This is literally the traditional orthodox theology of the Eucharist.

If anyone replies either that as a matter of fact the Breaking of the Bread, though a solemn Christian occasion, does not mean all that to him, or else that his critical faculties compel him to doubt whether Jesus intended in the Upper Room to bequeath the service of Holy Communion to the Catholic Church, then I would put it in this way. It seems certain at least that Jesus knew that his approaching inevitable death would somehow release divine forces that were waiting to come into operation. The Kingdom lay upon the other side of his own death. At the same time the cause of God was safe, and God's victory was his victory. Accordingly, when the Twelve were expecting to be

bound in some sorrowful covenant of recollection, a promise that they would never forget that night of gloom and tragedy, he touched their sad obedience with his own faith and transformed it to a Eucharist of praise. It was not his death that he was giving but his life. As he put to their trembling lips the chalice of his suffering and sacrifice, he carried them forward in heart and mind to the day when he would drink it new with them in the Kingdom of God. Is it therefore too much to say that behind the simple Breaking of the Bread—whether or not it is known fully to the worshippers—there stand the initial gift of Bethlehem, the Life of Ministry, the Cross of Calvary, the triumph of Easter, the mount of the Ascension, and the Pentecostal inauguration of the unfailing kingdom of the Spirit ?

Further, it has been found in experience that the Eucharistic Presence—as might be expected from the Lord's choice of the human terms " body " and " blood "—is not only, and, I think, not mainly, the overwhelming presence of the Divine Eternal Logos. It is a more brotherly companionship. It is the always sacred, always penitence-compelling, yet tender, intimate, affectionate presence of the human Saviour.

It is my Maker—dare I stay ?
My Saviour—dare I turn away ?

The one word that sums up and expresses the devotional theology of the Eucharist is the name " Jesus."

Beyond this, it is here suggested that Christian sacraments are natural, ethical and " democratic."

1. *Natural.* When Amyas Leigh's mother saw him drinking strong ale at breakfast (the almost universal custom of Elizabethan England, from the Queen downwards) she suggested to him that those who drink beer think beer. His reply was that those who drink water think water. For many years of my life I considered this to be a sufficient answer. But about 1913 I read a charming little book called *Walking Essays* by Mr Sidgwick. He there discusses *inter alia* the plea that beer is the democratic drink, and urges that, even so, there is something still more elementary. For water is the drink of Nature.

It is not in itself a very serious argument. In fact I am proposing to apply it to the plea for the use of sacramental wine. But it does suggest a real principle. This is that, with certain qualifications, e.g., the necessity of control, that which is according to Nature is right. The moment you get clean away from Nature, you become artificial. Therefore your religion *must* contain a use for Nature. If Nature is what Wordsworth thought it was, if Saint Paul's speech at Athens and the Christian doctrine of Divine Immanence are true, Nature must have a place in Christianity. The religion which does not disdain the use for the highest purposes of things that were born within and nurtured upon the bosom of Mother Earth is the one that belongs by natural kinship to ourselves. For we by our physical

lineage are sons of earth. Our Saviour, himself incarnate, found in fashion as a man, was accustomed to handle bread and wine and water with intimate affection, with simple homely mastery. It is wholly characteristic that our Lord, the countryman, the wood-worker, the friend of fishermen, who fed the hungry, and told simple rustic stories about seeds and harvest fields and sun and rain and trees and living water, should choose as his method of perpetuating the glamour of that night of nights, when memory was most poignant and anticipation most intense, the use of material symbols.

Since then there has been development. No one pretends that the highly-organised and ornate ceremonial of the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter in Rome or of Saint Paul in London is the same as that which expressed the creative rite in the Upper Room. And it may be that some of the development has been unwise. But the principle of the development has been liberal and reasonable. The manner of that worship which would specially be described as Catholic affirms that there is no avenue to the soul, neither sight nor sound nor even scent, which cannot be used in the work of *Sursum Corda*. There seem to be two classes of persons for whom a non-Catholic type of worship does not sufficiently provide. Some are artistic. Those who are such are fundamentally and permanently such. The result is that either they will use what they possess in worship, or they will not worship.

Others—a large class—either in some moods or in all moods, find it hard to concentrate on mental issues and invisible ideals. They cannot, or they cannot for the moment, get beyond the visible ceremony or the stage of crude petition. It would be easy, and it is common, for the Church to miss both marks, to offend the artists and to miseducate the simple by practising a degraded art. If these two dangers are avoided there is another, less relevant in this connection, but of great importance, the danger of disappointing those in whom the intellect is dominant. But even as far as the two classes mentioned are concerned, to understand that the actor and the painter have their own character and their own method of approach, and at the same time to have a motherly compassion for those whose ways are simple and whose gifts are few, is a great mark of sanity and a great glory of the Church.

2. *Ethical.* It is of course easy to say that all the ethical meanings of the sacraments have been read into them, and that there is no real reason, apart from what the Bible chooses to assert, why unleavened bread should be a symbol of sincerity and truth, or leavened bread a symbol of malice and wickedness. But I submit that some of the meanings exist *per se* inherently. In the first place the act of receiving a sacrament deals a great blow at pride, the sin of sins. Not only because you receive it kneeling, if you do, but because you receive it at all. It is a good lesson in humility to hold out your hands to receive a simple,

elemental gift. Then, bread is itself an honest, homely thing; wine maketh glad the heart of man; water is cleansing; joined hands are loving; hands laid on a head are benedictory. Above all, the common meal is actual fellowship, of the simplest, deepest, least self-conscious sort. When at the Labour meeting a Duke's son hob-nobs with road-sweepers, the fellowship, you feel, has been rather laboriously achieved, and may anyhow rest on nothing more than the intellectual razor-edge of political agreement. But at the altar, without effort, without talking about it, sometimes even without knowing it, persons, who have in common nothing but humanity and Christianity, are mates in Christ.

3. "*Democratic.*" I do not know any better word than this for what I mean. I have often been censured for misuse of it, and I admit that it is not correct. I am not referring to questions of Church government. What I mean is a condition of affairs in which every person is allowed to count, a condition which produces real fellowship, not the gay *camaraderie* of the mere "pub" or the mere club, but the serious responsible fellowship of citizens. I agree that the sermon has something of this quality. A sermon is not of necessity undemocratic. Why not? Because, like the speech of the political orator, it takes much from what the audience are vaguely feeling. It takes this and gives it back to them with all the form and order and coherence that the preacher's skill and knowledge can

produce and all the life that his fervour and genius can inspire. It is, so far, democratic. The prayer-meeting, again, is actually a valiant attempt to be democratic and nothing else. I respect it as much as anybody and like it much better than some. But there is some peril of self-consciousness—no doubt constantly overcome by virtue of simplicity and the real desire to serve. To lead the assembly in prayer may sometimes be a little like proposing yourself for the committee. Whereas to receive Holy Communion is like recording your vote, a perfectly modest and yet perfectly tangible contribution. It is also more than that. The voter, as such has no personality. He is compelled by law to practise a quite inhuman extreme of modesty. He is merely one brick in the house that is a-building. But the communicants are living stones, to be built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. They give themselves to a Person. They know that character must tell, because what they say, as they come to be built into the Christian Fabric, is nothing less than this—

> Look, Father, look on his anointed face,
> And only look on us as found in him.

Here then is an exposition, reduced to a few words, to a great extent independent of questions of theology and ecclesiastical order, of what the Catholic Church holds up as the right way of worship. It is an ideal description. I concede entirely that a large part of the Church of England uses sacramental worship much

too little. I concede that, where it is used on a considerable scale, there is often only faint appreciation of the verities that lie behind, that the motive is often legalism and the manner formalism. Further, although I am quite sure that the Prayer Book liturgy needs drastic revision, I am constrained to confess that very few *per cent.* of the population would probably ever realise that even the most admirable revision had taken place. I concede that we have somehow contrived to make the Eucharist the remote prerogative of a seemingly-eccentric few, for the most part a leisured and white-handed few. It if ever ceases for a moment to be actually that, we have made it very difficult of understanding to the casual visitor. The ordinary person assumes that it is not meant for him. He does not even think that Holy Communion has any connection with the Christ of the Gospels or with Nature or with brotherhood—in all of which he is disposed to believe. I cannot understand why this is so, but I am quite certain that it is. In fact, the thing which is my chief sorrow as a priest of the Church is also one of the chief causes of my intellectual perplexity as an observer of affairs, namely that although Christ is the Son of Man, and Holy Communion is the blessing of bread for common use, yet no one, or almost no one, seems to know it.

It may be thought that this confession points a moral, that it indicates that the Church ought now to turn to other ways of devotion. But it seems to me

impossible to be faithless to a tradition which is not only imposing by its greatness, but is also mine. If to others it is not a Eucharist, at least it is to me. But it has seemed worth while to attempt this fragmentary contribution to the subject, and in making it to have as far as possible no reserves, to put all my cards upon the table. After all, the aim of this book is to stir up, as Saint Paul says, the gift that is in its readers, to move and stimulate their faith. And if the faith of the Church be in any measure quickened, everyone will be a gainer. I myself shall be a gainer, though I may never understand the means and manner of the gain. The hope is that the table of honest consultation may be indeed a holy table, even, in its plain way, an altar, on which the grosser elements, whatever there may be in any one of us of personal pride, ecclesiastical prejudice and conventional theology, may be destroyed as with consuming fire. The hope is that the better elements, whatever there may be in any one of us of real experience, real fellowship, the unleavened bread of sincerity and the desire for truth, may be blessed and bound together by the hand of him who is the true Celebrant at every Eucharist, that as there is but one Bread, so we who are many, and diverse, and also foolish and ignorant and sinful, may become one Body.

CHAPTER VI

NAMES AND THINGS

THE characteristics of Christianity with which we have so far been concerned are those which may be called Catholic. There is another set of characteristics which may be called Evangelical. The two sets overlap and are to a very great extent identical. In any case both are essential, and the only reason why the one has here been considered before the other is that the order has a certain logic. The name and credentials of a herald are announced before he delivers his message. The world is first confronted by the Church, and then hears what the Church has to say. But the impression which the Church desires to make upon the world is not merely an impression of Catholicism. It is more than that. The impression —and this is absolutely vital—must be Evangelical as well.

What is Evangelicalism ? Externally, it may appear to consist of the use of a certain terminology. Expressions like " Jesus only," " Conversion," " Salvation," " Saving faith," " The precious blood," " The finished work of Christ," " not under law but under grace," suggest what is commonly meant by Evangelical

religion. Language of this sort is now-a-days unpopular. The reasons for the unpopularity are not all equally creditable. But among the better reasons are (*a*), a very natural feeling that it is too strained, too intense for common life, and (*b*), the historical fact that it has been spoiled by custom. (*a*) The terms are, of course, deliberately intense. They were coined because other terms, like " Mass " and " duties," which are not very sacred, and can be used without embarrassment in conversation in public places, were thought to lead inevitably to a mechanical religion. Accordingly, a more spiritual terminology, sometimes, but not always, more Biblical, was taken into use. It actually contains more meaning, and is proportionately harder for the plain man to use. (*b*) That it has been spoiled by custom is unhappily certain. Cromwellian soldiers talked habitually in the language of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. Cromwell himself used it for business letters or military despatches, and he meant every word. " The reader," says Thomas Carlyle, " will be wise to believe that these Puritans do mean what they say, and to try unimpeded if he can discover what that is. Gradually a very stupendous phenomenon may rise on his astonished eye. A practical world based on Belief in God." That is quite true, but what happened was that others followed, not meaning it so much, and the Puritan fashion of speech has become discredited. It is significant that Milton, a Puritan of Puritans, but also a master of the artistry of words, foresaw this and

escaped the peril. But the fate which befell the unflinching, whole-hearted Hebraism of the Puritans has in part befallen the specifically Evangelical terminology. What is to be done?

One simple remedy is to avoid all stock terms and labels. From time to time it is worth while (as in these pages it is thought worth while) to attempt a deliberate explanation of what is meant by certain traditional elements of Christianity. In such attempts the labels must be used. But as a rule it is the path of wisdom for a Christian apologist or preacher to deal always with the things themselves and never to mention their names. An honest and sensible speaker can win a fair measure of agreement from an English audience for almost any kind of "ism," provided that he does not put a name to it. But once breathe a suspicion of an unpopular label, and the previous question will certainly be put and carried. For example, a Parochial Church Council is a Soviet, nothing more or less. But it will not always do to tell them so. And even if the label is reasonably popular, interest is killed by repetition. Love turns to hatred very soon. We can all remember sermons in which *crambe repetita*, the merciless iteration of catch-words like "Holy Church," "Blessed Gospel," "modern thought," enraged and wearied us beyond endurance. The fact that you may happen to believe in all three does not make it any less exasperating.

Another remedy is this. Distinguish between the

classical, essential Evangelicalism and that which belongs to a particular epoch and a particular school. The classical Evangelicalism is that which grows out of the Gospels, and is fed and nurtured by the constant, humble, devout study of "The sinless years, that breath'd beneath the Syrian blue." It can almost be summed up in a single word—a technical term indeed among Christians, but still possible, because not known and discounted by the public—the word "recollection." To think a great deal about Jesus Christ is the real, unfailing cure for all false theology and all bad conduct. It must be done deliberately and ceremonially more than once every day. But it must also be done as occasion can be made to serve for one walking in the street, or sitting in his chair at home and taking his ease or making plans for to-morrow or next year. The kind of Evangelicalism lived by Thomas à Kempis, Francis of Assisi, mediæval German mystics, innumerable hosts of quiet souls in all centuries, before and after the sixteenth, Irish Papists, Clapham Churchmen, Cornish Methodists, East Anglian Independents, is in the great tradition of the Gospels themselves.

But there was one shaken and disturbed epoch, and there has been an unbalanced school. At the beginning of the sixteenth century there was great need for protest. Theology was arid. Superstition flourished. Religion, which was intended to be life, had come for very many to be a handful of formulas, seven almost magical sacraments, and a haunting fear of after death.

The Reformation let in breaths of air and brushed away some cobwebs and corruptions. It renewed the reality of the Bible and prayer and a great deal more besides. But it had this curious and unfortunate result. It had altogether a great many results, including the break-up of Western Christendom and the beginnings of Nationalism. But the one now in question was as follows :—The Reformers took theology proper, that is doctrines about God, very much for granted. The Thirty-Nine Articles, which have the mark of the sixteenth century all over them, deal briefly with theology, but their real interest—as that of all the manifestos of the period—was in what is called Soteriology, or how to get saved. Original Sin, Free Will, Predestination and Election, Faith and Works—these were their favourite topics. In other words, they thought much too much about themselves. It is not that they were selfish in the ordinary moral sense. But, intellectually and theologically, they were self-centred. Following Luther, they made man's faith the decisive, almost the creative thing. Desiring to sweep away a system by which man had seemed to be trying to save himself by performing the right acts of obedience, they substituted a system by which some men would presently be attempting to save themselves by having the right kind of faith. But the truth is that man cannot save himself by either of these means, or by any other. The great Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, which is so well brought out in the

Eleventh Article, is that man is accounted righteous (i.e., judged, not as he is, but as he from that moment begins to be) *propter meritum Domini per fidem.* It would be untrue to say *propter fidem.* The final, the efficient, the meritorious, the instrumental and the formal causes are all divine. And faith is the means by which alone the gift can be received.

It may fairly be said that they were too much interested in the way in which the thing was done, or rather in their own analysis of the way in which the thing was done. And this preoccupation lasted a long time. The seventeenth century Puritans became in course of time Nonconformists. They have of course developed in many ways but they still retain a good deal of the old tradition. But besides them the Churchmen who led or were produced by the later "Evangelical Revival," restored much of both the dogmatic and the phraseology of the Puritans. The inner strength of this Revival is happily unabated. It has even been increased by the contribution of some Evangelicals of another sort, like Stanton, Dolling, and a host of others. But some of its defects and mannerisms were long-lived. It is not very long since there were many preachers whose sermons invariably contained what was called "the plan of Salvation." The "plan" was an unhesitating, unqualified "Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained," and the exposition was intended to be sufficient to enable any uninstructed and unconverted person in the congregation to grasp

there and then the whole case for that particular form of Christianity. About 1900, not long before he was ordained Deacon, a young man was warned by a very old great-uncle, aged 95, that every sermon of his must contain " the three R's—Ruin, Reprobation, Redemption." But the old man dated from a far distant period, he had long ceased to have any " truck with parsons," and he must have been almost the last of his race. Very few now can remember the time when the word " godly " was confined (the exclusive use of " Christian " lasted rather longer) to those who held certain views about the Bible, about amusements and about the day which was miscalled the Sabbath. Or the time when a sermon was doubted, if not actually condemned, because it drew its text from the Gospels instead of from some of the more controversial parts of the Epistles of St. Paul. Yet the time is almost within living memory.

But these things are only the mist-clouds that surround the shining of the Gospel-sun. The real verities for which Evangelicalism stands are imperishable. All the best Evangelicals, some of whom call themselves Catholics as well, while the rest are becoming more Catholic every day—and, anyhow, it does not matter a brass farthing what anybody calls himself—all the best Evangelicals are children of light.

The real verities are imperishable. Above and beyond all is the conviction that the Gospel is not good advice, or good conduct, or good intentions, or a good

idea. It does not consist of knowing something, or believing something, or doing something. It consists of something that God has done. It is news of something that has happened. " God so loved the world." The word " preach " occurs frequently in the English translation of the New Testament. It suggests to most people a lengthy and rather boring explanation. But the Greek word really means " proclaim." The earliest Christian missionaries went about shouting to the world, " Hi ! Stop ! Listen ! I say ! Have you heard the news ? " That is why it is called a Gospel. It does not consist of aspirations. The aspirations of mankind are very noble. They climb like Gothic arches, and reach up towards heaven. But we are not all good at climbing, and not even the best of us can climb all the way.

The Christian faith believes itself to be a matter of divine revelation, and the Christian life is a way that rests on divine grace. The intellectualism which pretends that man can by himself find out all about God, is a short-sighted ingenuity. And the arrogance —its technical name is Pelagianism—which pretends that human effort is all that is wanted, was justly compared by a correspondent in a daily paper some years ago, to a man trying to save himself from drowning by catching hold of his own hair ! The notable thing missing in some of the modern re-statements of Christianity is the sense of divine arrival from without, to reinforce the thin impotent forces of mankind. The

one idea which is vital to Evangelical religion is the idea of "Came down from Heaven." "Down," is of course, only a metaphor, and "came" is not much more. But the necessary core of the Christian creed is that Christ is not merely the fine flower of evolution, but the Divine, the pre-existent, the Eternal Wisdom of the Father. He was in the beginning with God. He was the medium of Creation. He was the Light of men, of Moses and Gautama and Plato, of Cretans, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, of Akhnaton and Confucius. He then added to his inherent nature the nature of a man. But he added it in such a way that the original deity did not annihilate or envelope or super-impose itself upon the human nature, or continue side by side with it, or as its mystic soul or centre. Uniting itself with Jesus, as his Mother bore him, body, mind, and life and spirit, it expressed itself through every navigable avenue of his human thought and speech and action, God in man. When the first tidings of a unique vocation—emparabled for us in classic pages as the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel—came to the promised bride of Joseph, the Carpenter of Nazareth, when God did not abhor the Virgin's womb, then the Gospel of Christianity began. Evangelical religion is made possible by the great miracle of Lady Day.

There is no adequate alternative for this. It is not enough to ascribe everything to evolution and gradual improvement and the Semitic genius for religion, and glimpses of illumination up-rushing from the sub-

conscious. It is not possible to say that philosophy, research and speculation can discover God. It is not possible that they should. Nor is it likely that they would. A thing so important as the discovery of God would not be left to depend on the possession of exceptional intelligence or advanced knowledge. All the biggest things in life come in other ways. The biggest things are always free, like the sunshine. A soul discovers God as a young man discovers what it is to fall in love, or a woman discovers what it is to be a mother. God is a thing that happens to you. There it is, and once it has found you, you cannot get away from it. Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" is true psychology. So in Saint Paul the verbs of religious experience are very often in the passive voice. The process is not always smooth and gentle; the man is not passive in the moral sense. Rather, the process is converting, overturning, revolutionary. The man is pierced and rent and shattered and re-made. But the act is the act of God. The supreme expression of it is, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." The alternative to this, the theology built up by philosophic methods, is an ingenious essay. It is a helpful accessory. It is a test by which to examine the consistency, the consequences and, humanly speaking, the correctness of the impressions that are registered. But it must lack the reality which conversion gives even to the simple and unlettered. The scientific knowledge of a professor of obstetrics may be very

great, but there is one secret which is not known to him, but is known to the mother of his or of any peasant's children.

The real Evangelical religion knows nothing of the arrogance of self-salvation. Plumbing the depths of man's consciousness, it finds there not a power, but a need. Evangelicals have seen no reason to invalidate the experience of the people who are described in, or who wrote, the Bible. They readily acknowledge that religion is not magic. Grace does not work mechanically. It is not simply like turning a tap. There must be receptiveness, harmony, co-operation. But they resist the new tendency to democratize the idea of God till he is only the *vox populi*. They do not pin all their faith for the regeneration of the world to General Elections, or Direct Action, or " the younger men and women of to-day." They do not look within themselves for the promise of their own redemption. They know that the world is the very thing which needs redemption. Above all, they know that they need to be redeemed themselves. They have an inner standard by which they detect the hollowness of much modern language, whether it be that of atheistic determinism, or mildly philanthropic worldliness, or political quackery, or intellectual pride. Even if it be clothed, as it sometimes is, with pious phrases, it is really the language of a disguised selfishness. To make up your own mind and then call it Evolution, or Destiny, or Education, or modern thought, or even God, is

a very common, but quite un-Evangelical thing.

The kind of life indicated in such words as, " Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness," or, " The love of Christ constraineth us," the kind of life lived by that selfless champion of negro-emancipation, Zachary Macaulay, by many a slum-curate and Salvation Army Captain, by missionaries in Africa, by mothers in back streets and suburbs, that is the real humble, Evangelical, God-directed life. " How can I doubt," they say, " when God has spoken ? How can I murmur or repine, when my vocation is so clear ? How can I consent to yield before temptation, when the Lord who died for me is ready at my side—' day by day and in every way '—with his endless stores of grace ? " That is the faith that wins the real victories. To know that there really was a time when the heavens were opened, and Very God of Very God was made flesh and dwelt with us ; to know that his life, his perfect and sufficient life, was made available for us, put at our spiritual disposal, on the Cross ; to know that the purpose of that mystery of love was to renew, re-sweeten, and redeem the mean and stagnant resources of our weak humanity ; to know that godliness consists in recollection of our Saviour's daily presence—that is the faith that triumphs over the infirmities of its own believers, and will triumph in the end over the indifference of the world and over the strongholds of the evil one.

CHAPTER VII

DIRECT ACTION OF THE SPIRIT

ARM-CHAIR philosophies and abstract theories are in the long run unsatisfying things. It is no doubt essential for an intelligent man that he should be able, if he wants to, from time to time to sit down in a chair and think out his religion without insincerity. If he finds that he cannot do that, he will have to change his religion and try another. But thinking, even thinking out, does not cover the whole ground. Men want to be able to live in their religion, and, when the time comes, to die in it. To this end a man's religion must be such as will not only commend itself to the acceptance of his mind, but will issue in principles and practice. Is not the life more than thought, and character than argument? A man's life consists not in the multitude or in the acuteness of the ideas which he possesses. The Evangelical, believing his Gospel, appropriates it to himself in a way that is both complete and personal. "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up. I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for me. Then said I, Here am I. Send me," "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision," "I know in

whom I have believed," " He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee," " He laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not "—these and the like sayings are the personal watchwords of the Evangelical.

Of course, no kind of religious experience is really individual, in the sense of being a separate, non-social thing. What is called the herd-instinct is one of the basal instincts of mankind. And this has been sanctified by Christianity. Our Lord's favourite title " the Son of Man " is a collective, representative title. The word " saint " never occurs in the New Testament in the singular. It is true that God often seems to be dealing immediately with the soul, but there is always something, the Bible, or other books, or friends, or teaching, a using or remembering of some kind of relationship, behind it. At the most secret moment, when a man is alone in his own room, he is really surrounded by all his contemporaries, and standing on the shoulders of all his predecessors, and a sharer in the communion of all the saints. There have been would-be Evangelicals who thought they could sit at home and read the Bible, and so would qualify for a place in heaven. But the real Evangelical understands that only " with all saints," as Saint Paul says, can you " comprehend what is the length and breadth and depth and height ; and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." He understands this and is only comforted, not distracted or confused by it. But he also knows that the thing must reach him, and

take possession of him. The real Evangelical understands that it is ridiculous to say "I will have no one to come between my soul and God," because, according to the Bible, as has quite justly been pointed out, everyone must come between the soul and God. "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" That is, in fact, how God reaches you. He reveals to you the highest, divinest power of the same love with which your mother loved you as a child, he gives the truest, divinest object and direction for the whole of the faculty of loving which you have so far come to possess. But he does reach you in yourself. Conversion is, as it was in the days of Saul of Tarsus, a voice that comes out of heaven, and is heard speaking in language that a man can understand in the inner chambers of the soul.

Some Christians of to-day are obsessed with what are called the social implications of the Gospel. Some still have never heard of such a thing. Some do not believe it. But there are many who feel it a great deal, perhaps overmuch. They speak often of working for the Kingdom, they aim at the Christianising of industry and commerce, they even indulge the desperate and fantastic hope that the Gospel and politics are not wholly incompatible. Some of the clergy, for example, are accustomed to ally themselves with the Labour Movement. They do so, because as citizens they happen to desire certain objects, but also—a deeper thing—because as Christians they hope to witness

and assist in the increase and clarification of the rather vague and inarticulate Christianity that they see in the movement. But if they are Evangelicals they have to recognise that the field where the real victories are won is the field of character, and that for character the really vital process is the process of conversion. If you could secure in full to-morrow the ideal programme of whoever are the wisest statesmen, you would still want the men and women who have been touched and kindled and redeemed by the love of God.

Redeemed! That is where the Evangelical comes in. It would probably be admitted that in this country the compelling motive for social reconstruction is at present, and, as long as men clearly remember the great war, will continue to be, "Shall they have died in vain?" One of the most amazing things in the history of the world was the way in which in 1914 and after it could be said that—

> The strong young servants of the pen or spade,
> Go gaily to begin a harder trade.

The boys of Battersea, the clerks of Lombard Street, the Durham miners and the Derby railway-men, mill-hands and bus-conductors, sweeps and undergraduates, owning themselves no foot of English soil, died for the land in which they had been born, on which most of them had only just scraped a living, in which they had expected some day to be buried. And these, heroic as they were, were not the only heroes. Most of us now begin to take a larger view. We remember that

enemy soldiers died in millions too, and that their children suffered as well as ours. There are at this moment crippled Prussians, blinded Pomeranians, in Austria a whole nation reduced to abject penury. We dare not forget these, though we cannot help thinking chiefly of our own. All those of any nation who have passed into that other state of life to which God has called them, died in some kind of faith, conscious, semi-conscious, unconscious. Some had a clear, unclouded sense of patriotic duty. Some died with definitely anti-militarist principles held firmly, some blaspheming, some dull and unthinking, but almost all with extraordinary patience. At any rate in every case they performed the supreme act of giving their lives. Many have left no child to carry on their name. The task of the survivors, especially the non-combatants, is to help in forming and raising a spiritual posterity which will do all and more than all that the best of them desired to do and would have done. It is not easy, because the conscious ideals of a good many of those men were actually not very high, and also because the motives of peace-time, though deeper and greater and far more constructive, are less obvious than those of a soldier in a war. But in so far as the task can be performed, their death will have had a redemptive value. It is a true description of the condition of surviving populations to say " Ye are not your own. Ye were bought with a price."

But this is exactly what the Evangelical has always

said, and has often been criticized for saying. He has always found in the Cross of Christ the centre of the history of the world. This, partly, is admitted. No one doubts that Jesus was pure and holy, and was wrongfully condemned to crucifixion. No one doubts that his was a classic case, or that his martyrdom was actually the seed of the Church, that the members of the Christian society which at once sprang into existence believed themselves to have been redeemed by his death. This much is universal knowledge. But to Evangelical religion the Cross is not only an instructive fact. It is the turning point of the whole of human history. It focuses into one historical event that which is the eternal purpose of the unalterable nature of God, namely the purpose of atonement, of bringing men at-one with himself. If you want to know what God is like, look at Christ. If you want to see Christ at his most natural, most characteristic, most illuminating moment, look at him on the Cross. The purpose to redeem mankind was born in the original fact of his divine sonship. It was matured in the long years of manual labour and the short months of ministry. But on the Cross it was released and made available. It is hinted at in his seven spoken words, it radiates from his face, it is expressed in the life-blood ebbing from his veins. The little company of actors in the story of the Passion are humanity, ourselves and others, caught up and photographed in the act of doing what the ingratitude of men is always doing to

the love of God, a company that is completely representative of mankind. Mary of Nazareth, Mary of Magdala, Peter and John, Pilate and Caiaphas, Pilate's wife and Simon of Cyrene, the centurion, the soldiers and the casual bystanders, between them represent all types in Church and world. And the Figure lifted on the Cross, having by heavenly inheritance a perfect life, which in its earthly pilgrimage has not been spoiled by any sin, is content not to keep it, does not plume himself with inward ecstasy because of it, but releases it to become through faith and sacrament the spiritual potency of the children whom he dies to bear. The deaths of all martyrs are redemptive. But redemption itself has its Alpha and its Omega in the death of Christ. To believe yourself to have been redeemed by the Cross is to be an Evangelical, and to apply the power of the Cross to personal and social re-construction is to be a co-operant with God's purpose for the world.

Co-operation with the Cross, with a thing that was actually a signal failure, is clearly a process without any promise of mundane efficiency. It is a spiritual process through and through. The prize that makes the process worth undertaking must be a prize of a spiritual nature.

What is the meaning of the word "spiritual"? That which is spiritual is often contrasted with that which is material. But the contrast is neither Christian nor scientific. The real contrast is between the spiritual and either (*a*) the worldly or (*b*) the mechanical.

(*a*) The attempt in its most obvious form to combine worldliness with Christianity is happily becoming rarer. It is true that some Christians still love money and luxury and popularity; some Christians are still proud and selfish and unsocial. But persons who are essentially worldly do not now try, as they sometimes did in the last century, to cast over their worldliness the veil of Christian respectability. For the most part they either neglect or flout religion. This is satisfactory, because it clears the issue. The "Christian employer" is still one of the stock objections in discussions that from time to time take place. But the objection is beginning to be beside the point. Real Evangelical Christianity is beginning to be recognised as the only kind of Christianity worth considering. And Evangelical religion has no dealings with the spirit of worldliness. It has indeed always been found difficult not to overshoot the mark. Avoidance of certain pleasures has led to Puritanism and censoriousness. It has led to the condemnation of gifts of God like alcohol and tobacco, of arts like that of dancing and the theatre, of amusements such as watching horse-races and card-playing, on the false ground that they are inherently and necessarily evil.[1] It has led

[1]It is of course undeniable that a race-course is infested with thieves of various kinds, and that thousands of homes have been ruined by gambling. And as a matter of fact, though I have lived for many years near Newmarket, I have never seen a horse-race. But I am here concerned to deny a false Manichean principle. There are a number of excellent reasons for personal abstention from many things not evil in themselves. And one of them is want of leisure.

to wholesale judgments passed against all who practise or condone such things. This is ingratitude and narrow-mindedness. But there have been from Evangelical quarters noble protests against worldly motives, and—a far more important fact—innumerable lives lived for a motive dominantly spiritual. It is true that success, whether it be the modest respectability of a good coat or the financial stability of invested capital, has often been the inevitable consequence of regular living and honest work. But such success, when it has come, has again and again been treated with a marvellous capacity of detachment. "Rich men, furnished with ability," have dwelt not only "peaceably," but simply and unselfishly "in their habitations." Our Lord blessed the poor, that is, he congratulated them on their estate. He meant of course not that grinding poverty which is the hideous under-side of modern civilization, but those who enjoyed a decent, frugal way of living—work, wages, and a home, with a vine and a fig-tree in the garden. He said that it was dangerous to be rich. So it is. But it is fatal to be worldly, to think that nothing matters but prosperity. Christianity affirms that the real scale of values is utterly independent of worldly prosperity. The valuable things are truth, honour, courage, love, cleanness, justice, peace, compassion and the like. They are always worth having, and nothing outweighs them in importance or can compensate for their absence.

Another sense in which worldliness is a disease of religion is this. Those who have the misfortune to belong to a Church which is established by law, to which, if to any, most of the rich and fashionable sections of the population are at least nominally attached, find it difficult to avoid reliance on social and legal sanctions. Those who desire most earnestly to avoid such reliance are not necessarily advocates of Disestablishment. They may think that for the sake of the State the Church ought to bear the burden of being Established, and in any case they will not deny that rich and fashionable people have souls to be saved. But they must assert the spiritual independence of the Church. The temptation is to suppose that the Duke or the large subscriber has the right to determine what Christianity is or shall say, or to act as if Parliament could really change the law of God. The need is to rely only upon spiritual means. Confession before men, saying prayers in a barrack or dormitory, risking prospects because honour or justice is involved, refusal to compel the mind or overawe the imagination of others in cases where that could actually be done, willingness to suffer, the habit of making what is called an act of faith all the more earnestly after a personal failure, the daily confidence with which space is bridged and obstacles annihilated by the practice of intercession, such are the means by which belief in God is nurtured. And belief in God—in the real God—involves reliance upon spiritual means. It

saves from social snobbery and Erastian churchmanship.

(*b*) But the spiritual is also to be contrasted with the mechanical. And here the true nature of Evangelicalism has in late years been brought out more clearly. There was a time when many Evangelical Churchmen undervalued the Sacraments. Some do even now, and there are Evangelically-minded Christians outside the Church of England, i.e., the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, two very different groups, who do not use them at all. Why not? Because they are afraid of a mechanical religion. It is quite right to be afraid of that. But is God mechanical when he makes the sun rise every morning, and the night follow the day, and the seasons of the year recur in perpetual succession? That which is fitful is not more but less divine than assured continuous mercies. "Nature," said J. B. Mozley, "is all the time working like a machine, and sleeping like a picture." Yes, and why is the work so unfailing, and the picture so exquisite? Because God is all the time thinking and loving like a father, who forgets nothing that his children need. When the Word was made Flesh, it became for ever impossible to say that matter is inherently unspiritual. When Jesus on a certain Thursday night took in his hands the commonest of all the substances by which man is accustomed to appease his appetite and to maintain his strength, he revealed the capacity of material substances in general, and he made it possible for that particular substance

of bread to have, after a heavenly and spiritual manner, a certain vitalised and magnetic character. He said "This is my Body." The Christian Society, being itself, in another sense, the Body of Christ, has dared to apply the words and meaning of the Master as he did, and has believed, and has verified the belief, that he does thus give his life to the faithful. Is this unspiritual? Is it not rather the extreme of spirituality? It is to refuse the obvious and prosaic suggestion that common things are of necessity unclean, and to accept the very daring and imaginative doctrine that consecration, a purely spiritual process, is able to impart a spiritual potency to the plainest of plain foods. It is to insist so much on the heavenly priesthood of Christ, in his willingness and in his power to bless, as not to shrink from believing that he allows even the meanest of his earthly priests to stand on tip-toe, to hold up the hem of his Lord's celestial vestment, and to co-operate, in this world of sight and sound and touch, with the eternal work of the inmost Court of Presence in the heavenlies at the right hand of God the Father. Christ is so truly the sole fount of grace, his Spirit is so truly the one means of life, that he can afford to send his Spirit to consecrate the bread, the people, and the priest.

What are called "means of grace" can be used mechanically. So can anything, the Bible, Sunday, the franchise, or the intellect. But the Christian Sacraments in themselves are intensely Evangelical.

They are Jesus Christ. Baptism is—"Suffer the little children to come unto me." Confirmation is—"Come, and you shall see." Absolution is the touch of pierced hands laid upon a bowed head. Communion is—"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

Of all these, Communion is indeed the supremely Evangelical and spiritual thing. It renews Bethlehem; the people who kneel before an altar are sharing all and more than all the experience of the shepherds who once knelt before a crib. It derives its grace from Calvary; the Chalice is the Holy Grail in which one form of the legend—a legend only, but symbolically true to fact—says that a faithful watcher caught some drops of the precious blood that would else have fallen on the ground. It owes its triumphant force and life to the Resurrection; it unites to no dead Christ, but to one who was dead, but liveth, and behold, he is alive for evermore. It is still possible, Sunday after Sunday and day after day, because it has for its eternal background the intercession of the ascended, priestly King. There the pierced hands of the Redeemer are still lifted; here the hands of unworthy, ignorant believers are held out to take their supernatural food. The truly spiritual—it is a happy thing for those who themselves are made of flesh and blood to be able to believe—is not the immaterial; it is the material, used and possessed by that Spirit who is the very Breath of God, of Jesus and the world.

CHAPTER VIII

FACTS AND FREEDOM

THERE is a time of life (it used to be about eleven, but with the modern increase in the rate of living it is probably much earlier now) when the condition of being misunderstood brings with it a dim and melancholy satisfaction. "Perhaps I shall die soon, and they'll be sorry then." But this sentimental compensation is quite temporary. It is unknown in middle age. Too soon the years arrive in which immolation is exasperating only. We have to dree our weird unconsoled.

The greatest sufferers are those who talk or write about religion. What happens as a rule is that no one listens at all. And those who do nearly always seem to have heard something quite different from what was said. For example, a great many Christians have actually been talking in a thoroughly liberal way for a number of years, but the fact has not yet dawned upon the public. Most of the orthodox exponents are quite reasonably liberal and most of the liberal exponents are quite reasonably orthodox, but no one knows this. Christendom is commonly supposed to consist of those who believe that the world was made in six days and

those who believe that Christianity itself is an obsolete compound of Semitic poetry and pagan mythology. Liberalism, it is thought, is one thing and Christianity is another. But the truth is that liberal is simply an indispensable adjective and Christianity the necessary noun. Wherever Christianity is illiberal, it is not Christianity and will not survive.

The marks of Liberalism are two. In outlook it is open-eyed. In method, it abjures compulsion. It is therefore essential, first, that Christianity should not shirk or deny any of the facts, and, second, that, supposing it were possible to convert a man by pressing a button in his waistcoat, Christianity should not do so. Can it be pretended that these conditions are fulfilled? It will be enough for the present to deal with one of them. Does the Church face facts? The numerous people who care enough about Christianity to discuss it, but do not care enough about it to attempt to understand it, would answer unanimously "No." It is assumed by them that all Christians live in a fool's paradise, are criminally simple, hopelessly misinterpret and indeed hardly even share ordinary human nature, and spend their lives in being shocked. They are believed to have their minds made up already on every subject, and to profess to know the answer to every question before it is asked. They are thought to attach immense importance to belief in the literal truth of the ancient fable of some Hebrew Æsop about a talking ass, or of that bold but most instructive

metaphor which described the Jewish captivity in Babylon as the swallowing of a disobedient prophet by a whale. The most fantastic doctrines are ascribed to them. " It will not do to say that it [the Bible] is not verbally inspired. If the words are not inspired, what is ? "—is an actual quotation from a leading secularist writer of the nineteenth century ? Another writer of the same school expressed in 1906 and republished in 1910 these astonishing opinions—" That the Bible should be open to criticism at all seems to me inconceivable if it really be God's gift to mankind," and—" We must accept the whole (i.e., of the Bible) or reject the whole."

All this may possibly be a description of something, but it is not a description of Christianity. In the matter of the fool's paradise, Christians are not merely aware of human frailty, but they habitually take serious precautions to counteract it. High standards, strictness of life, preoccupation with such things as spiritual eugenics, the cure of souls and public moral health, are the marks not of carelessness or ignorance, but of a scientific appreciation of facts and possibilities. Augustine was a rigorist ; his discipline of himself and others was severe. But it was because he had known and been defeated by temptation. Again, in the matter of the crude and unthinking dogmatism attributed to Christians, it may be said that while nearly all persons, and therefore *inter alios* very many Christians, are constantly guilty of it, yet Christianity

itself has some peculiar safeguards. Christianity begins with Christ, who was Hebrew, ancient, and a non-class-conscious manual worker. Christians are Gentile, modern, and compelled to recognise the existence of class-consciousness. Therefore Christianity, wherever it succeeds in existing at all, must be singularly independent of racial, chronological and class prejudices. It draws its conclusions straight from the sheer humanity of Christ, and its declared aim is to make them—or at least to verify them—fresh every time. Finally, in the matter of the supposed infallibility of the Bible the opinions attributed to Christians are a grotesque and cruel fabrication.

The first Liberal Christian was Christ. It is hardly possible for modern readers of Saint Matthew's Gospel to understand the revolutionary nature of the simple formula—"It was said to them of old time . . . . but I say unto you." The Law of Moses was not merely sacred, it was divine. It was believed to have been uttered by the actual voice of God and written with the actual finger of God. One Rabbi went so far as to say that God himself obeyed it. "There are twelve hours in the day. During the first three the Holy One sits down and occupies himself with the Torah." To Jewish ears from Jewish lips the re-statement recorded in the Gospel is audacity itself. So was the intuitive certainty, sweeping away cobwebs, which elicited the awestruck tribute—"He speaketh with authority, and not as the Scribes." Saint Paul

was described at Salonika as one of the men who have turned the world upside down (" a conspiracy for the break-up of the Empire " would be a good up-to-date translation). So he was, but he was also the man who turned the Church inside out, and revealed to the astonished Barnabas and Peter and the rest the true inwardness of the message of the Master. We can easily see now that it was he who rightly understood the implications of the original message, and that Jesus belonged not to the Jews only, but to the world. But it was not easy at the time. A few years later, the writer of the Fourth Gospel was again a bold innovator. Desiring a supreme category to explain Christ, he took the term " Logos," used by the best thought of the period to describe the divine principle of the universe, a term as well known to thinkers as " natural law " or " energy " or " evolution " is to-day, and said that it was the Logos which in Jesus had become flesh. The second-century Apologists had the hardihood to suggest that Christianity, the creed of prisoners and suspects, was actually a philosophy. They used the current Stoicism to develop their suggestion. Origen was even more fearless. He made Neoplatonism his servant, and soared far beyond the Neoplatonists into the realm of speculation. Athanasius stood against the world for a term which was new, un-Biblical, unpopular and had heretical associations, because he knew that it was the only term which would safeguard, as it has safeguarded, *la foi du charbonnier*. The rigid and

austere Augustine, who with his right hand created the mediæval Church and with his left hand laid the foundations of Calvinism, two notably exclusive and self-sufficing systems, confessed that it was the non-Christian Plotinus who had converted him to Christ. The Aristotelianism of the Schoolmen, which seems now so cold and static, so ultra-ecclesiastical, had actually been taken, in defiance of synodical and legatine prohibitions, from the Moslems and Jews. It was thought most dangerous. But it was the best philosophy available for the kind of systematising work that was required, and Thomas Aquinas built upon it. His merit is that he faced all the facts he knew. He also faced a good many that were not really there at all. But he thought they were. Lastly, Francis and Dominic struck out a wholly new way of Christian living. They gave to the *Imitatio Christi*, which in the early centuries had meant martyrdom, the meaning that it bears to-day. And the Pope, who had just laid down that no fresh Orders were to be established, had enough sense to see that this was the real thing, and enough Christianity to be illogical—and liberal.

Here is an imposing list of names. None of them shrank from things new out of superstitious devotion to things accustomed. The common impression that what is called Free Thinking is freer than Christian thinking is an illustration of the tyranny of words. The power possessed by any organism to adapt itself to the conditions of the time and yet to retain its

essential character is the measure of its life, its freedom and its fitness to survive. Stoicism and Neoplatonism have perished. The Stoic and perhaps the Neoplatonic interpretations of Christianity are back numbers. The Scholastic method is abandoned. The physical boundaries of Christianity have been battered by the Natural Sciences, its historical origins have been exposed by uncompromising critics, philosophy has weighed it, psychology has dissected it, humanity as a whole has hacked off bits of it. But it exists, because it has—not always at once, but in the end and on the whole—faced all the facts.

The second mark of Liberalism was said to be refusal to use force. If it were possible to convert a man to Christianity by any magical or mechanical device, a Christian missionary, devoured with zeal to extend his Master's Kingdom, must not use it. What, in this matter, is the Christian record? Here again, we can begin at the beginning. There is a mysterious story in two of the Gospels, which it is not likely that the Evangelists or their sources had invented, the story of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness. It exhibits three principles of action, the more remarkable because they are maintained by one who is represented as the possessor of very unusual powers, and the possession of powers at all beyond the usual has frequently made havoc of principle. The three principles are (1) refusal to take advantage of preferential treatment, willingness to accept the ration, and, if there be no ration, to accept

that. (2) refusal to overawe the imagination of hysterical Messiah-seekers by making the traditional appearance riding on the clouds of heaven. (3) refusal to attempt to bring in the Kingdom of God by the external means of political or military action. As Sir John Seeley once suggested, the moral level implied in all this can be faintly estimated by any one who will imagine the strain that would fall upon his own character with the power of becoming invisible at will!

The same generosity is apparent all through, in both the purpose and the performance. That the Eternal, in whom we live and move and have our being, should lay his glory by, and trust himself unarmed to the changes and chances of this mortal life, and finally, when the extreme crisis came, should appeal even then to nothing of his majesty, to no threat of consequences or claims of Creatorship, but only to the argument of love, is at any rate a magnificent spiritual experiment, worthy of God. Some people are puzzled when they hear it said that Christ is never more truly divine than on the Cross, but that is only because they are the slaves of physical conceptions, and of the delusion that love is a feeble quality. The Cross of Christ is the most spiritual and also the most daring thing that ever was. It was a tribute to the adventurousness of Abraham that "he went out, not knowing whither he went." It may be called a sporting instinct, a romantic, generous, heroic trait. The record of Christ

is evidence that God has the same quality on the supreme scale.

If we are to prove the spirits whether they be of God, one searching test is love of freedom, especially for others. There was a certain amount of nineteenth century religious liberalism, which did some damage to Christianity, because, unfaithful to its name, it robbed God of his freedom and enclosed him in a shut universe. The religious liberalism of the twentieth century is more promising. It either is or will be a friend of Christianity. Men who love freedom will not finally imprison either God or His Church. The release of God from his nineteenth-century captivity is being effected by improved philosophy. The release of his Church from a condition of being imprisoned or overmuch suspected is a result of the growing sense of fairness. One of the most encouraging signs of the times—though it be in fact only the position to which men are being driven by the desperately chaotic state of the contemporary world—is the increasing number of persons who are disposed to say to the Church—"All right, go ahead. We do not care very much whether you are High or Low or Broad, or (this to the present writer) whether you claim in some strange sense of your own to be a combination of all three. But the situation is so difficult, and it is so doubtful whether the next generation, even whether we ourselves to-morrow, are going to have any spiritual basis for life at all, that, if you possess any sort of Gospel that

will function in any way to redeem and convert and stimulate and brace, in God's name bring it out and turn it on."

It need hardly be said that it is a point of honour for the Church to return, and indeed, if it can, to anticipate the compliment. And here we have in the past departed very gravely from the Pattern shewed to us in the Mount. For the first three centuries the real banner was held up bravely. There was being waged a long war between two Empires, only one of which was armed. Victory, as always, rested with the persecuted side. It was the government which trusted in the big battalions, the Christians who endured as seeing him who is invisible. And the big battalions were worsted, and the unarmed Christians proved the better men. Professor Gilbert Murray has said—" the minds that are now tender, timid and reverent in their orthodoxy would probably in the third or fourth century have sided with the old gods ; those of more daring and puritan temper with the Christians."[1] So far, so good. The Christians fought for freedom, and prevailed. But the victory was, as often, a disaster. The calamitous conversion of the Emperor Constantine put secular weapons for the first time into the Church's hand. Wherever and whenever the weapons have been used, or even have been taken out and fingered, the lapse from the ideal has brought its own doom. In *The Brothers Karamazov* the Grand Inquisitor

[1] *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 180.

thought to know better than his Master. "Why have you come back to spoil our work?" Then Jesus, the condemned prisoner, bent down, and kissed him on the lips. And with that touch the iron of a bad conscience entered into his soul. He knew that he was wrong. And he opened the prison-door and sent the Master out into the dark alleys of the town. "Go, and come no more . . . come not at all, never, never."

Those who read history, being Christians and having anything like a passion for freedom, can hardly fail to arrive at two conclusions. One is that in criminal and civil cases sometimes, and in what are called political cases very often, the prisoners have been right and the judges have been wrong. Pilate was guilty and Jesus was the real conqueror. The Christian martyrs were sometimes too Puritan, and sometimes hysterical, but in the main they were right and the Empire was wrong. It will be known some day that Gandhi and Eugene Debs and scores of Irishmen were more right than those who imprisoned them or shot them. There are many close parallels, which cannot escape the student of early Church History, between the repression, so unsuccessfully and on the whole so reluctantly practised by the Roman Empire, and the methods of the great Empires and great Republics of to-day. There is more to be said for the C.O.'s and the Communists of recent years than for the Home Office and the police. Blasphemy is to all Christians a painful and distressing thing, but a blasphemer may

be nearer to the kingdom of heaven than the legislation passed against him. The "Red Weekly" is bizarre and crude, but much of what passes for respectable journalism is conscienceless.

The other conclusion is that the honours have not always remained with the side that definitely claims the Christian title. The Inquisition is an old story. But there have been in more recent years endless cases of political persecution, institutional tyranny, social ostracism, intellectual intimidation, economic pressure, domestic unfairness and general bullying. And in this the oppressors were often on what was called the Christian side, nominally higher, really immeasurably lower. Their victims were not always right, but they themselves were always wrong. Sometimes the sufferers were actually reforming Christians, who were excommunicated and done to death by the Church itself, and then, if their spirits revisited the scene a generation later, they probably saw their own sepulchres erected in all stupid innocence at the public cost by a time-serving, uncritical posterity. It is no real defence to say that the persecutors were men who believed overwhelmingly, or that they wanted to stamp out soul-destroying heresies and so to save the world. It is no real defence to say that till quite recently hardly anyone at all understood the duty of religious liberalism, or that other institutions, like the British Empire, Germany or Belgium, and innumerable kings and governments in earlier years, have robbed and slain

more shamelessly and for more sordid objects. All that may be true, but the fact remains that the Church was there to proclaim Christ and give a Christian lead to the world. If the very trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle against tyranny?

It is desperately hard to combine intense personal conviction and a respect for the liberty of others. So much zeal is illiberal, and so much tolerance is simply sleepy. The fire of conviction led theologians in earlier centuries to burn their opponents in the market-place: it leads now to a desire to eliminate opponents in more subtle ways. On the other hand the easy indifference which thinks that no one religion is worse than any other and therefore there is no need to worry or to have a criterion at all, is below the proper level of intellectual and spiritual competence. To have convictions and to trust them so utterly that, in order to test them, to ground them or to modify them, you can face any and every critical attack, that you can engage in any kind of controversy that may be required, without having recourse either to shouting in order to maintain your own courage, or to shooting to break that of your opponent, to believe and to debate about things that are more dear than life with the courteous, friendly violence of the football-field, this is the high and liberal adventure to which Christians are pledged.

CHAPTER IX

SOME LIBERAL CONCLUSIONS

IT was thought worth while to discuss to some extent the principles of Liberalism before coming to its results. Most of us are too prone already to take advantage of short cuts and ready made conclusions. We are worse in fact than the King of Hearts in Wonderland. He wanted the verdict first, but he at least consented to have the evidence afterwards. We clamour for a brief and breezy verdict, without any evidence at all. Hence, to guard writer and reader against the sin of unscientific time-saving, the eighth chapter in this volume.

But if Christianity must of necessity be liberal, and if the outlook and method of Liberalism be as has been suggested, what difference does it make to the view which will be taken of the Bible? When it is said that as a result of critical enquiry the old tribute—"Thy word is a lantern unto my feet: and a light unto my paths"—comes back in a new sense and with greater surety, is it true?

In the Old Testament the sense is certainly very new. The study of the Hebrew sacred books has been revolutionised. (1) The stories of the patriarchs are all

legends. Such persons as Abraham and Jacob may have existed, but they were most likely tribes. Their doings are for the most part the migrations, religious customs, treaties, inter-marriages and wars of tribes. The story of the sacrifice of Isaac represents the period when the old religions still ordered the sacrifice of the first-born, and the most enlightened were beginning to replace it by the sacrifice of beasts. (2) Jehovah or Yahweh was for centuries a tribal deity, in covenant-relation with the Israelites, as Chemosh and Milcom were with the Moabites and Ammonites. The moral obligations of the Yahweh-covenant were singularly high, but Monotheism in the true sense of the word was unknown. Each nation had its God. When Yahweh was stronger than Chemosh, then Israel prevailed in battle against Moab, and *vice-versa*. It is not till the eighth century B.C. that we find with Amos a real belief in Yahweh as the Creator and as the Arbiter of the fates of all the nations. The opening chapters of Amos are the first trumpet-tones of that which has been ever since one of the supreme teaching and inspiring voices of the world, the voice of Semitic Theism. Moses, David and Elijah had believed in a God of Israel, an ethical Being, with a lofty code of righteousness, but still only one of many. (3) The study of the Old Testament should begin with Amos. There for the first time we have contemporary history. When Amos relates how he was turned out of the Chapel Royal for what we should describe as brawling,

he is depicting a scene which really happened, in which he himself had taken part. When the writer of Judges vi, 25-32[1] gave his account of the origin of Gideon's other name, Jerubbaal, he was inventing an incident to explain a fact of which he did not know the meaning. In his own time the name Baal was and had been since the days of Jezebel an abomination; in the time of the Judges it had been accepted as a pious synomym for Yahweh, and Gideon, if he was really a man and not a tribe, had assumed in all good faith the Puritan appellation of "God-plead-for-me." (4) A large part of the Pentateuch and the books of Samuel and Kings, and almost the whole of Chronicles, reflects less the conditions of the period described than those of the time

[1]And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: And build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the Lord had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night. And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

of writing. Most of the laws of Moses were really written by Ezekiel or someone else about the time of the Captivity. The laws against the "high places," prescribing that sacrifice should be offered only in the Temple at Jerusalem, were not, as it would appear from the narrative, disobeyed under the Monarchy. They had not yet been enacted. The narrative is full of anachronisms, late developments read back into the early years. It is unlikely that any of the Psalms are David's or any of the Proverbs Solomon's.

But all the same the Old Testament is a book of true religion. As a record of spiritual evolution, when properly re-arranged and dated, it is of surpassing interest. And as a record of genuine revelation, the gradual educating of an ill-civilized, but religiously precocious people by the patient disclosure of a divine intention that grew clearer with their increasing capacity to understand, the Old Testament has not yet been invalidated. Whether you think of the spiritual effect which it has actually had on the lives of its devout readers, or you compare it with other contemporary literatures, it is obvious that there run all through it both a passion for righteousness and a sense of God as the sole giver of all righteousness which have been verified by the Christian conscience and can come themselves from no other source than divine inspiration. The choice of lessons from the Old Testament for public reading in the Church is not always easy. Parts of it are unintelligible except to scholars,

some is unedifying, some is uninteresting. But broadly it contains the story of how the true God became known by degrees, and how he dealt with a very real and very human people. The earlier Hebrews had nationalised and anthropomorphised him, and some even of the later interpreters[1] bore inadequate and misleading witness to his character. But the total impression made by the Old Testament is that of a real unveiling of the one true God, the same God whom Plato and others in Greece and Asia were finding by the road of speculation, whom Christ was presently to reveal at Bethlehem, in Galilee, on Calvary. Plato represents discovery. The Jews represent revelation. Save for the Gospel itself, the Hebrew prophets are the supreme achievement of religious faith. Nothing can shake the conclusion that the Psalms, and the books of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah were written by men who were in touch with the real God. The story of Jacob is an epitome of the whole history of the Jewish race. It is wonderful that with such commonplace and unattractive material the Lord should have done so much. The reason was that Jehovah was indeed the true God, and Jacob was not Esau. With all his limitations, his love of bargains and sharp practice, Jacob is matured by the divine discipline and he comes in the end to deserve his name of Israel.[2]

[1] e.g. the author of *Ecclesiastes*, the Psalmists here and there, and later still the Scribes and Pharisees.

[2] The spiritual value of the story of Jacob, which seems to me entirely independent of any questions that may arise about its

The revolution in the way in which the New Testament must now be read is not nearly so great. The books were written much nearer to the times which they describe, and the age, though not critical, as modern scholarship is critical, had nevertheless a clear sense of fact and of its importance. It so happens that there was considerable danger towards the end of the first century and at the beginning of the second that Christianity would be resolved into a Theosophy, or vague belief in the Christ-spirit, neglecting, forgetting and denying its real roots in history. From this the Church was saved by the increasing, and eventually universal, circulation of the lately-written books of the New Testament, especially the Gospels. Their writers, and the readers who approved the books, had not the historic mind in the way which makes modern historical scholars familiar with the life-story and accumulated meaning of an institution, a cathedral or a liturgy. But they had it in the broad sense in which any plain Christian exhibits it to-day, when he replies roundly, as he would to some mythological vaporisation of Christianity, that it makes all the difference to be able to believe that the events really happened at least more or less as they are described. It is a most significant thing, which has profoundly affected the Christianity of all Christians ever since,

historical accuracy, is made much clearer by such treatment of it as is found in Charles Wesley's hymn "Come, O thou Traveller unknown" (*English Hymnal*, 378) or Canon Mason's *The Ministry of Conversion*.

that the Fourth Evangelist, desiring, as he clearly does, to teach theology, was not content with a thesis, a literary form which he was thoroughly competent to handle, and did in fact use in what is called his First Epistle, but made his chief contribution to the treasures of Christianity in a narrative, historical form. Moreover, a large part of the remainder of the New Testament was written by a man who had inside knowledge, who played always a leading part and generally a controlling part in the events to which he alludes. The whole collection is the record of a strongly-featured movement, by men who lived in or very shortly after the earliest creative stages of the movement.

The difference is mainly this. We do not now take the books at their face-value. Historically, we do not accept a statement because it is " in the Bible." Saint Paul's Epistles are evidence because they are clearly his dealings with an actual situation. Saint Mark's Gospel is accepted as broadly a true picture, because there are sound reasons for believing that it contains the reminiscences of Simon Peter. The teachings of Jesus included in the First and Third Gospels come from a source known as Q, which appears from internal evidence to date from the earliest years of Palestinian mission preaching and to contain the translated but otherwise the actual words of the Master. We are on much stronger ground when we say of a passage " This is Q," than the old-fashioned defenders, who could only say " It is in the Bible." A few things in the

Gospels are legends, e.g., Matt. xxvii, 51-53.[1] Others can very easily be re-stated. Thus, it seems certain that what really happened in Matt. xvii, 27, was that Peter sold the fish, and paid the tax with its value.[2] On others, like the cases of demoniacal possession, the critical judgment is suspended.[3] The Fourth Gospel, though in some respects minutely accurate, yet deliberately claims a freer hand than the others in dealing with history. Some of the things said by Jesus in this Gospel were really said by the Heavenly Christ in mystic communion with the amazing genius—John or some other—who composed it. But, religiously, the fact that these things do not jar on the Christian conscience, and have in fact illuminated Christianity with rays of the finest, whitest light, is our tribute to the inspiration of the man. We have not yet worked out—so far as I know—I certainly have not—a modern theory of inspiration in the light of the facts revealed

[1]And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

[2]Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

[3]There is a recent and very illuminating little book by E. R. Micklem, *Miracles and the New Psychology*, which draws many illustrations from modern missionary experience overseas and does much to establish the credibility of the Gospel narratives. I do not myself understand how any open-eyed, fair-minded person can read the Bible, especially the New Testament, without exclaiming with the Psalmist "this is the Lord's doing: and it is marvellous in our eyes."

by this kind of criticism. It ought not to be difficult. Now that crowd-psychology, "human nature in politics" and such things are beginning to be understood, the examination, by those who have experience and sympathy, of "prophetic" or "inspired" psychology on the three-fold basis of belief in God, belief in Christianity and unqualified acceptance of proved literary and historical facts, is an immediate and hopeful duty. But enough is understood already to make it possible to say that the Bible of a critically-minded Christian is a lantern, not only to his feet but to his head. We read the Bible now like any other book, and we find that no other book is like it.

If this be the result of liberal thinking about the Bible, what of orthodoxy in general? Orthodoxy is still possible, but it is worn, as Ophelia said of rue, "with a difference." The difference arises not so much from any superior acumen of our own as from the date at which we live and the kind of experience that has been thrust upon us. But the difference is a difference for the better. Hard as it is always to govern our verdicts and actions thoroughly and consistently by that which is, so far as it goes, our *bona fide* theological belief, it has become easier in recent years to believe, if not in a very effective way, at least in a genuine way, in our own religion. One reason is that there is so little else to believe in. The obvious futility of many of the old conventions has driven us to take our stand on whatever rock there is. And the rock is, I think, emerging.

About the continuance of the Church of England, precisely as it is at present, I am sanguine enough to take an unfavourable view. But I am at the same time greatly encouraged by the number of people in existence who seem to believe in God and to be trying to rule their own practice and to fashion their hopes and policies for the future of England and the world on the ground of a conviction that Christ is in some real sense the Lord of Life. Here is at least the raw material of orthodoxy, belief in God and belief in Christ.

What is the foundation of this belief and this obedience? What is the true doctrine about God and about Christ? One of the most striking phenomena of to-day is that the word "God" is used so freely in modern literature. A large number of modern novels are about people who seem to be genuinely discovering, nearly always apart from the Church and very often in open contempt of it, but genuinely discovering some part at least of the real God. At the same time there is a marked reaction from the word "Almighty." The word, in the Creed, never did mean "All-powerful," "Able to do anything," but rather "All-ruling." But even so, there is a reaction. It is partly because the tragedies of life since 1914 have made some people feel that God must be "justified in his saying and clear when he is judged" even at the cost of "letting contingency into the heart of things," and partly because some people (Mr Wells, for example) think

that it is more interesting and more useful to believe in a limited God.

The point about contingency really involves a discussion that would be too long for this book, and too deep for my capacity. But my solution, born in faith rather than in logic, but not unsupported by reason, is that in God we have one who is not really surprised or taken aback by anything that happens in this world. There is in things what seems to us, and is for us, contingency. The fact is that the life of man is a co-operation between God and man. Because this co-operation is spiritual, you can never say where the share of the one leaves off and the share of the other begins. In fact it is not relevant to talk of shares at all. And because the results of this co-operation are expressed at our end in terms of human action, they are fallible. God, so to speak, does not press his point. He allows things to go wrong sometimes, partly, it would seem, because some local and temporary "failures" are the incidental by-products of a large beneficent scheme, and partly because he is content that we should make mistakes. The "failures" are not marks of ignorance or incompetence. They arise from such limitations as are involved in being magnanimous and patient. And the human mistakes are allowed for educational reasons. But the Educator knows. The difference between right and wrong is not a realm in which God is always making fresh discoveries. What we call ethical improvement consists

in finding out little by little what God has known all the time.

The other point is not quite so difficult. The "Invisible King" of H. G. Wells, i.e., not the Veiled Being in the background, but the God of whom he claims to know something (and does indeed know something), is limited. He grows and learns and strives. Other writers, less brilliant, but with more experience of the methods current in theological and kindred studies, have worked out more cautiously what they have called the "democratic conception of God," a God who grows as humanity makes progress. In this conception the Christian doctrine of divine immanence is pressed and isolated. God is an human product, with a divine title rather illogically assumed. Now, the real answer to this very interesting and reasonable demand for a limited and growing God is to be found in Saint Paul's teaching about Christ. A great many Christians have much to learn, and a great many others have everything to learn about this—Christ and the Church, His Body, the Body which is still being built up and perfected "till we all come unto the measure of the nature of a perfect Man." It is all found in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. You get there the idea of development, which is so attractive; you get room for the working out of all that is implied in the amazing Pauline affirmation, "in him is neither male nor female"; you get scope for the contribution of all that any human being has

or ever shall have to make to the Christ-cause; and above all, you get a really divine origin for this Incarnate Redeemer and this glorious possibility for man. And you get it all stated in reasonable theological and (as we think) not illogical terms.

This leads at once to the doctrine of the Incarnation. Here there is a "difference," which has enormously enriched not merely knowledge or theology in general, but actually the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation. The problem out of which the "difference" arises is this. It relates strictly to those definitions of orthodoxy other than the Creeds which are hardly known except to students, but it is of great importance.

The problem is this. It is commonly agreed among students that the controversies about the person of Christ which were brought to an end in the fifth century by what is called the Chalcedonian Definition, were in part concerned with questions that in these days seem remote. In part only. The attempt to shew that Christ, in Professor Gwatkin's words, is "as divine as the Father and as human as ourselves" is by no means a remote and academic task. It is of absorbing interest to all Christians. But the attempt to establish finally a sort of balance in which full intellectual justice shall be done to two whole and undivided natures in one person, seems to many an over-subtle, unpractical and perhaps impossible task. Moreover it is generally allowed that the Chalcedonian thinkers—among the ablest thinkers of their day—

had no adequate conception of personality. Now, personality is the key-conception by means of which any union of the divine and human must be explained, if it can be explained at all. A form which liberal Christians would readily accept has been suggested by an eminent liberal theologian, "the fullest expression of Divine Personality that is possible under the conditions of genuinely human life." Suppose this to be accepted as a statement of what Christians believe about Christ. The questions arise—How much is possible under such conditions? To what extent must the divine lay aside his glory and his wisdom, if he assume humanity? What is involved in believing that Christ is very man of very man?" These are the problems of to-day. To them must be added a whole series of questions arising partly from some hints in the Gospels and Saint Paul's Epistles and partly from the democratic tendencies of recent political and even philosophic thought. Attempts are being made to work out the meaning of such expressions as "the Body of Christ," "the Christ that is to be," or the recent statement of a famous philosopher, not referring exclusively to the historic Christ, that "in the conditions of the highest human life we have access, as nowhere else, to the inmost nature of the divine."

The hope of a solution to these questions lies in a great modern discovery. The discovery is the discovery of the ordinary person, and moreover of the fact that the ordinary person can be of either sex. The Church

has known this all the time, and, in its Incarnation theology, has said so. But our understanding of it has been quickened by recent events and recent discoveries. The observed force of public opinion, the passing of the Enabling Act, votes for women, the discovery that the New Testament was written not in a special "Biblical" language, but in the universal speech of the common people, the many illuminating parallels that can be drawn between early Church History and certain contemporary movements which are making their way upwards from below—all these things are already being used, and are waiting to be used more completely, in the enrichment of our Incarnation theology. This is a great subject which I hope some day to be able to treat on a larger scale than is here possible. In the meantime I suggest that while a "democratic conception of God" is by itself quite inadequate, yet God does express His work and His life in terms of human action. The *vox populi*, when it can really be ascertained on a large enough scale, is at least an echo of the *vox Dei*. And in a study of this democratic element in Christianity and of the connection between the Christian Revelation and Democracy, there is a rich field of unexplored Christian theology.

In more definitely intellectual things, it is a commonplace of students that Christianity was in the early centuries the heir of all the ages. Founded upon the soil of Judaism, it soon learned to speak with its Hebraic

accent the language of Greek wisdom and Roman statesmanship. The little flock, the Galilean peasant-fellowship, to whom it was the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, did gain in comparatively few years at least the *entrée* to the Kingdom, and by the time that three or four centuries had elapsed the *personnel* of the Kingdom was roughly the population of the civilized world. The attempt to shew that either Saint Paul or anybody else contrived to substitute a Greek mystery-religion for the original message of Jesus may be said to have failed. But it is admitted that a great deal of Greek philosophy, something of the Phrygian and Egyptian mysteries, and something of the ancient speculations of Persia and elsewhere, were, so to speak, " baptized " into Christianity. Some regret this, and wish that what they call the simplicity of Galilee could have been preserved. But the simplicity was always a profound simplicity. And after all the Church must grow up, must learn to use adult language, must take its degree, as it were, in the University of the world.

In later times the inclusions were of a rather different sort. The Mediæval Church took over the Mediæval Empire. Post-Reformation Christianity largely took over nationalism. In our own day we are surrounded by things—Pragmatist philosophy, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Pacifism, Militarism, Feminism, Trade Unionism, dictatorship of the proletariate, non-Christian Religions, modern artistic movements, Georgian poetry,

and a hundred things beside—all of which have a certain relation to Christianity. What we have to do, it seems to me, is to hold fast to what has been given, the initial, creative, or rather recreative gift of Christ, of God who in Jesus of Nazareth entered our life and made it for all time a divine profession to be a man—to hold fast to him, and at the same time to assist in building in to the evolving, developing, increasing Body of Christ whatever in all these movements is true and good and beautiful. Whatever is that is worthy of inclusion. What is that belongs to Christ, and must be claimed for him. The Incarnation will not be perfectly fulfilled till it has been claimed and included.

It is often supposed that it is hard to be both orthodox and open-minded. And of course, if to be "open-minded" means, as Mr Ronald Knox said of a distinguished (Oxford) theologian, "to have kept your mind open so long that now you can't shut it," it is no doubt impractically academic. But my point is this: Liberal Catholicism is not really a contradiction in terms. Is it not possible to believe with all your mind and with all your love that, when Jesus came, the heavens were opened and a new thing began to be, a thing surpassing all poetic thought, Immanuel, God with us? To discern in Jesus the answer to all questions of a weary world, to find in him the ground of your own hopes of redemption and the promise of a regenerated mankind, to draw from him, and him only, your means of grace and faith in glory? And

just because of this, because you see in him the Son of Man, standing, illuminatingly and redeemingly, behind the sons of men, his brothers, in their life and in their death and in their resurrection, you will know that whatever is like him in this world must needs have been of his creation and must be by us baptized into his Body. Baptized, converted, purified, illuminated and united. I do not mean that Nature is the same as Christ, or that wherever anybody has a good idea or does a kindly deed, there at once is Christianity, whole, perfect and complete. These things must be by our ministry baptized into his Body.

Baptized is surely the right word. Because to be baptized means to be united with the redeeming Death of Christ. " For know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death ? " It will hardly be denied that those who have most truly lived, that is, those who have known sorrow, are best prepared to see that Christ is most truly Christ upon his Cross. There is the centre of Christianity. Just at the point where our need is greatest, in sins, in trouble, in the hour of death or at the death of others, there the Cross meets and touches us at the point of our extreme necessity.

And if the Cross and therefore, by consequence, the Eucharist, are at the centre of Christianity, our Lord himself is the Central Figure of the world. All those tremendous sentences in Saint Matthew xxv, whose range is so unlimited, which cover every kind of service

that men can do to one another—they begin with " Inasmuch," that is " Whatever, and for whomsoever in the world," and end with " Me." Our Lord is the Central Figure of the world.

So far all Christians go. The question of orthodoxy becomes acute when we touch the Creeds. Modern re-interpretation of the Bible and the " difference " of modern orthodoxy cannot fail to affect the meaning assigned to the Creeds and possibly also the use made of them. The question of meaning is fundamental, and therefore even the more important of practical suggestions (like that of Dr Inge that at Anglican Mattins, either always or sometimes, the *Te Deum* should be substituted for the Apostles' Creed) must here be omitted for lack of space. In any case the disposition to avail ourselves of such proposals will depend on our general view of the value of the formularies themselves.

There is one purely Anglican formula, to which in general terms the clergy still have to assent, for which very few have much to say. The Thirty-Nine Articles are for the most part concerned with controversies which seemed important in the sixteenth century and are expressed in the language of that time. But most of the controversies have long ceased to interest us, and the language has long ceased to be current coin. Moreover, the number and variety of the statements made in the Articles are so great that subscription makes the " grammar of assent " very complicated and

the ethics of assent rather dubious. Father Sancta Clara in the seventeenth century and Tract 90 in the nineteenth have shewn that the Articles are "patient of a Catholic interpretation," and it is in that sense that a great many clergymen assent to them. But the custom of retaining assent to an intricate collection of sixteenth century controversial theology, and the practice of assenting in a sense which the document does not seem at first sight to bear, are alike unsatisfactory. Further, it is hard to defend the imposition of any specifically Anglican requirements of theological belief over and above the creeds of the whole Church, and it is also hard to defend the demand that the clergy should have a clerical standard of orthodoxy of their own, different from and more stringent than that of the Church.

To come to the Creeds, what is known as the Athanasian Creed has one merit which is not commonly allowed to be such, viz., definite clarity of statement. It has other merits which would appeal more certainly to modern people, if they stopped to think of them. By explaining that "the Catholic Faith is this: that we *worship* one God in Trinity," it does something to correct the excessive intellectualism of most of the orthodox formulæ. Also, it insists on the complete humanity of Christ. It contains careful warnings against Tritheism, that popular but quite indefensible form of theological belief. And it declares in its final clauses that judgment will be passed on men for what

they have actually *done*. But with all its merits, the fact remains that it demands very considerable knowledge of history and theology, its technical exactness is commonly resented, its warning to Catholic churchmen of the peril of letting go or impairing the faith which has been delivered to them is very often neither welcomed nor understood. On the whole, its public use at Mattins on thirteen occasions in the year does more harm than good. It would be more useful in an appendix to the Prayer Book.

The Nicene Creed, which is the one general liturgical confession of faith known and accepted throughout Christendom, and the Apostles' Creed, which at least from the second century has been in the West the baptismal confession of individuals, are on a different footing. The great intrinsic merit of the Apostles' Creed is that it is an admirably constructed and perfectly fair digest of the doctrinal teaching of the New Testament. The great intrinsic merit of the Nicene Creed is that it contains the indispensable formula "of one substance, i.e., essence, with the Father," which safeguards the reality of redemption.

The great re-interpretations which must be made now by all who use the Creeds arise from the fact that they were compiled at a time when it was supposed that heaven was above the earth and that the earth was the centre of the universe. An expression like "came down from heaven" is for us a metaphor, perhaps necessary, but still a metaphor. For the

fourth century, and long after, it was literal truth. The word " ascended " requires to be treated in the same way. An earnest but ill-instructed preacher in a University pulpit a few years ago spoke of the ascending Christ as " defying the laws of gravitation." Better informed Christians think of Ascension Day as the end of the period allowed to the first disciples in order that they might learn the fact and something of the meaning of their Master's victory over death, and as the occasion which indicates to us his re-assumption of the eternal state. The notion of " went up " is a metaphor. In the same way " Maker of heaven and earth " is not now thought of as involving a purely external operation, but as one that at least includes the idea of Evolution. It involves an enormously larger and more complex process than was supposed by our pre-Darwinian grandfathers.

Ought we then to abandon the documents which embody an out-worn cosmology ? Even apart from history and sentiment, two potent factors, it would be extremely difficult. It is easier for the modern world to accept, and allow for, the Creeds as pre-Copernican and pre-Darwinian, than it would be to face the countless pitfalls, historical, philosophical, scientific, literary, artistic, with which modern theology would be confronted in constructing a new Creed. And many of us feel that the new Creed, if and when constructed, would arrest the mind at first, but that everyone would very soon be much more bored by it than anyone is by the

present forms. It would not have the quality of permanence, which the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed have. Add to this that the divided state of Christendom removes all prospect of agreed construction, and it is obvious that the difficulties are very great. But by all means let experiments be made. Any and every description of re-statement is infinitely worth trying.[1]

But assuming that the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds remain as the authorized statement of the Church's faith, it may be said with confidence that if the outlook be both Christian and Liberal, questions of interpretation will in course of time find solution. Among these questions is that of the nature of our Lord's Resurrection, an event of which Westcott said that " It belongs equally to the spiritual and the material order, and it reconciles both " ; there is the meaning of " the resurrection of the body," which is neither the resuscitation of the material particles which at the hour of death

[1]The chief argument in favour of a new creed is that the present creeds are too intellectual. They are of course very far from being that and nothing else. " I believe in God " is a statement of intensely moral character, and so are all the other statements in the Creeds. But we should like our daily profession of faith to include something more obviously ethical, something expressly relating to Christian character. The *Modern Churchman* for October, 1921 (Report of the Girton Conference) contained some suggestions in this direction. The most attractive of them was Mr. Harold Anson's suggestion that something might be composed on the lines of the statement in the Baptismal service, " Our profession is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him ; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living."

compose the earthly body, nor a bare immortality of the soul; there is a question about the conditions of our Lord's birth, the traditional account of which will be believed by such as find it congruous with their general belief in him, and will clearly not be believed by those who are indisposed to hail him as divine redeemer; there are the conditions of Judgment, a thing still often pictured as a Great Assize, with assembled multitudes and a Judge on a visible throne, but really somehow to be interpreted in less local and more spiritual terms than those: there is the *rationale* of the Gospel miracles, most of which are already so much easier to believe than they were a generation ago, but for which it begins to look as if we should presently find a different name—after which most of them will become more and more difficult to disbelieve.

Of the Gospel miracles some are of greater moment than others. The wisdom of the Church—or shall we say the Holy Spirit?—has put into the Creed the Resurrection and the Virgin Birth. I am not suggesting that these will be brought down to what we now call the natural order, but that they will be seen to belong naturally to a divinely natural order of their own. We shall find ourselves, I believe, unable to furnish an adequate explanation of our Christianity, unless we believe that the Divine Redeemer achieved a veritable conquest over death, not only by way of a hallucination of enthusiastic people, not even by way of a divinely caused illusion, an illusion intended to create the

belief that it did create, but by way of real and actual conquest over death. And we shall not have the true analysis of the entrance into our condition of God who was made Man, unless we believe that he was conceived none otherwise than by the Holy Ghost, when God did not abhor the Virgin's womb. Christians are flesh and blood, as Mary was. But also they are children of grace. And if they analyse that which has made them what they are, and remember that it began, creatively, on Lady Day, they will know that it comes, as it came to Mary, not by effort or evolution or eugenics or psychology but by the touch of God.

These questions—or rather the contemporary version of them—will be settled before long. It is of course no less certain that other questions or other forms of the same questions will by that time have arisen. Religious thought must be either dynamic or dead. The Church in earth is always militant, intellectually as well as morally and spiritually.

The main thing is this. The belief of liberal Christians is (1) that God gave to the world once for all the gift of Christ, and his purpose was in Christ to "reconcile the world unto himself," and (2) this divine, redemptive gift is still in the course of being gradually appropriated. As individuals and nations are gathered into membership of Christ's Body, Christ, who is already once for all made man, and is in himself perfect and complete, does nevertheless become more and more incarnate. His Body is, in Saint Paul's own

word, " fulfilled " or " completed." There is no second Christ, no modern, European Pentecost, no twentieth century re-creation of the Gospel. But, as Robinson of Leiden said in 1620 to the Pilgrim Fathers, the Lord has more truth still. The Catholic Faith is not yet finished. We do not at present know the whole of what Christ means. The Golden Age is always in the future. The best is yet to be.

CHAPTER X

COMPARATIVE RELIGION

COMPARATIVE Religion is a convenient title under which to consider some of the company which Christianity kept in its young days, and also some of its present neighbours and relations.

T. H. Huxley launched a shrewd indictment against nineteenth century English Christianity when he remarked that on the discovery of any new thing, the Church first of all says, " It is impossible," then, " It is against the Bible," and presently, " We knew it all the time." It was very ingenious, but it was not perfectly true, because there were always some in the Church who had more sense than that. There were always some who were challenged by the new thing to re-examine their beliefs, and then found that the beliefs were even bigger and better than they had suspected. But anyhow the remark illustrates humiliatingly enough the stages in the reception given by a good many Christians a generation or two ago, not only to such things as Evolution, to which Huxley was mainly referring, but to Comparative Religion when it was first talked about. However, it is better now.

Not many are now disturbed by such titles as "The Folk-lore of the Old Testament," or by the discovery that Abraham was a Bedouin *sheikh*,[1] that the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are full of Alexandrian philosophy and science, that the Nicene theologians were all Platonists, or that the date of Christmas was fixed in December from the Roman Saturnalia and the choice of the twenty-fifth is from the cult of Mithras. Nobody minds hearing that the ancient Peruvians had some kind of doctrine of Incarnation. It only shews that the instinct satisfied by Christianity was even more universal than we thought.

To begin with that which is most obvious, there are some Christians to-day who would like to disclaim or at least to conceal as far as possible their Hebrew ancestry. They resent it and are ashamed of it. But to do that is the mark of the parvenu, and even so is not creditable. It is no doubt true that Hebrew literature ought to be employed in Christian worship more sparingly and with greater discrimination than it is. There is no spiritual profit at all in hearing the story of how the earth opened and swallowed Korah, Dathan and Abiram, because they burned unauthorised incense in unofficial censers. It is, happily, not even true. The story is either a priestly invention to point an *a priori* moral, or a deduction, perhaps *bona fide*, but ultra-professional and actually mistaken, from some

[1] I think that the expression was first used by Dean Milman about 1850. See A. P. Stanley, Lectures on the Jewish Church, Part I, p. 11.

disasters[1] that had befallen certain Israelites. It would, in that case, be supposed that their fate must have been the punishment for some crime, and then the crime would be made to fit the punishment. But, apart from such demoralising stories, there is plenty of material in the Hebrew Scriptures for choice of lections, and, far more than that, it is historically impossible to deny that the Christian Gospel was born on Jewish soil, and grew up to learn the Jewish language. We must not suffer ourselves to be depressed by seeing the beginning in the end. We must be encouraged by seeing the end in the beginning. Just as the *pithecanthropus*, going for the first time experimentally on two legs instead of four, is an ungainly but prophetic figure, because he contains the promise of a Homer, a Dante, and a Shakespeare, so Jacob with his unpleasing dodges and his elementary beliefs, the ambitious, easy-going David, the tyrant Solomon, the ungentle Puritanism of Elijah, Nehemiah with his narrow patriotism, the Temple-altars reeking with the burning flesh of beasts, are the historical material from which the divine Captain of the Catholic Church drew his own earthly genealogy, and built up the language of his Catholic Gospel.[2] His

[1]Disasters, in the plural, because Numbers xvi is a composite narrative.

[2]I have referred here, as in honour bound for the sake of the argument, to some of the less Christian parts of the Old Testament, those upon which the effect of our Lord's regenerating hand is very clear. But always there remains the other side of the picture. For the most part his purpose "not to destroy, but to fulfil" was, so to speak, easily accomplished. Here are, for instance, some admirable words of Dr. Sanday—"How are we to bring together

Gospel went on, as an effective Gospel must, from the point which had already been reached. The maxim that the truth always is the truth may, theoretically, be a truism. But in practice it is not always true. A bolt *de cælo*, descending, sudden, unconnected with what has been, unrelated to what is, may make its mark. Its result may be a distinct, observable impression. But it cannot be called revelation. The meteoric arrival of some book of divine oracles, printed in letters of fire upon apocalyptic paper, would have amazed and terrified, but it would not have illuminated any body. The news of it would have ceased by this time even to have any interest. Effective illumination and enduring interest only came when God at once verified and transcended the inspiring gropings of the Hebrews, and gave the very image of his substance to place himself at the end of a long line of preparation and to fuse the broken gleams of a national evolution into his Catholic Lux Mundi.

those two parallel lines of prophecy, which exist side by side in the Old Testament but nowhere meet, the ideal King, the descendant of David, and the ideal Prophet, the suffering Servant of Jehovah? What have two such different conceptions in common with each other? They seem to move in different planes, with nothing even to suggest their coalescence. We turn the page which separates the New Testament from the Old. We look at the Figure which is delineated there, and we find in it a marvellous meeting of traits derived from the most different and distant sources, from Nathan, from Amos, from First Isaiah, from Second Isaiah, from Zechariah, from Daniel, from the Second Psalm, from the Twenty-second, from the Sixty-ninth, from the Hundred-and-tenth. And these traits do not meet, as we might expect them to do, in some laboured and artificial compound, but in the sweet and gracious figure of Jesus of Nazareth—king, but not as men count kingship; crowned, but with the crown of thorns; suffering for our redemption, but suffering only that he may reign." *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 404-5.

But Judaism was not the only preparation for Christianity. Even within the Old Testament itself, in the more liberal parts of it, there are hints of a coming universalism, when " Israel shall be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth." The book of Ruth and the book of Jonah are outspoken liberal manifestos. And countless features of the religion actually found in all parts of the Old Testament are borrowed from primeval paganism, from Egypt, Arabia, Crete, Babylon and Persia. Christianity itself owes much to other sources. Apart from specific beliefs and practices which were, to use Dr Percy Gardner's phrase,"baptized into Christianity" in the second century and onwards, it owes great debts in the beginning to Greece and Rome. The universality of the Greek language and the ubiquitous majesty of the Roman Empire were not merely dominating, unescapable facts, which the Church had to face. They also notably helped to mould Christian theology and to shape the fabric of the Christian Church. The Church was the heir of all the ages, the clearing-house of all the promises to pay. Justin, the second century apologist, speaks with surprising freedom of those whom he goes so far as to call " Christians before Christ." His words are worth quoting—" We have shewn above that Christ is the First-born of God, and that he is the Word (Logos) of whom the whole human race are partakers, and those who lived according to reason (logos) were Christians, even though accounted atheists.

Such among the Greeks were Socrates, and Heraclitus [a philosopher of Ephesus, about 500 B.C., who first used the term Logos] and those who resembled them; of the Barbarians [i.e., non-Greeks], Abraham and Ananias and Azarias and Misael and Elias and many others." "All the writers [i.e., Plato, etc.] by reason of the ingrafted seed of the Word, which was in them, were able to see the truth darkly." So great is the boldness of Justin about pre-Christian theologians and good men. And some of the Alexandrians, a generation later, were even bolder. Saint Paul, a century earlier, is not afraid to welcome the Empire[1] as for the present the chief restraint against what seemed then the imminent shock of Antichrist, or to set himself to build within and upon the Imperial framework that greater and more universal fabric of Catholicism which survived and was the successor of the Empire. The Church was a debtor, on a large scale and unashamed.

A little later there was willingness to "baptize" specific points of paganism. Not just at first, because just at first the Church was puritanically exclusive. It could not afford for the moment to give any countenance to heathen ways of either thought or life. And this covers the apostolic period. It is idle to suggest, as some do, that Saint Paul laid a Hellenic and distorting hand upon the affectionate memories of a few who had known and loved a Palestinian rabbi, and turned them

[1] That seems clearly to be the meaning of *τὸ κάτεχον* and *ὁ κατέχων* in II Thess. ii, 6, 7.

into a regular religion, complete with "Redeemer-God," theology and sacraments. There is no evidence at all for that process ever having taken place and a great deal against it. Also it must be remembered that both Saint Paul and the earliest Christians were Jews. Jews at that period were not given to adopting heathen religions. But the time soon came when the Church was predominantly Gentile, and then it is true that the converts, while turning *ex animo* from idolatry to serve the living God, yet brought their instincts with them into Christendom. Fortunately, by that time the Apostles' Creed had taken shape. It was no longer possible to alter the foundations of the faith. But there were boundaries on all sides to be determined. The wisdom which used and did not capitulate to the Gnostic "culture" of the period, the wisdom which was bold enough to draw its methods and its terminology from the Stoic and Neoplatonist philosophies, which satisfied the emotions of those who had been worshippers of Mithras or Osiris by providing mystery and liturgy and penance, which utilised the contemporary spirit of association by Agapé and guild and confraternity, was not the verdict of any Council of Bishops or committee of experts. It was the almost unconscious instinct of the Christian proletariate. Yet its wisdom was so consummate that it seems quite inadequate to call it human only.

Some of the actual adoptions do not win universal approval. Enquirers sometimes learn with regret that

many of the anniversaries of the Church Calendar, the feasts at the four quarters of the year, the Loaf-mass or Harvest Home, and many more, have pagan origins. For the great tirade, with which Fra Colonna horrified Fra Jerome in *The Cloister and the Hearth* is for the most part true enough.[1] More numerous are those who are sorry that Isis, Queen of Heaven, ever became Mary, Queen of Heaven, or that the gods were so largely succeeded by the saints. But so it was. And on the whole the policy—or rather the practice, for it was hardly policy—was dangerous but right. It is the method of Saint Paul at Athens—" What therefore ye ignorantly worship, that declare I unto you." It is the advice of Gregory to Augustine—" Let the heathen temples be turned into Christian Churches." It is the practice, to turn for a moment to the modern instance, of the enlightened missionary to-day—" We must exhibit, if we are wise enough, the Christian fulfilment of all the best that we can find in the thought of India or China or Japan. We must take the Sadhuism, the peacefulness, the detachment, or at other times, the fiery and perhaps twisted nationalism, of one, the

[1] I cannot refrain from quoting the conclusion. " ' Profane monk, know that but for the powerful house that upholds thee, thy accursed heresy should go no farther, for I would have thee burned at the stake," and he strode out white with indignation. Colonna's reception of the threat did credit to him as an enthusiast. He ran and hallooed joyfully after Jerome.

" ' And *that* is Pagan. Burning of men's bodies for the opinions of their souls is a purely Pagan custom, as Pagan as incense, holy water, a hundred altars in one church, the tonsure, the cardinal's, or flamen's hat, the word Pope, the — '

" Here Jerome slammed the door."

serenity, the family-affection, the ancestor-cultus of another, the courage, the ingenuity, the self-sacrificing patriotism of a third, and sublimate them all in Christ." It is, admittedly, a dangerous practice. It has led to grave errors, both anciently and recently. The conversion of the Roman Empire did overmuch to paganize the Church. And sanctionings of caste in Indian Christianity have before now prevented Christian brotherhood. There is always the possibility that for a time and in some places the heathenism will predominate. And anyhow you will have national Christians, with the old associations still all round them, with the old instincts still in the blood, with a local accent, a racial temperament, a climatically-affected type of Christian character. But of such is the Catholic Church.

Some things exist in nearly all the religions. Belief in God and in immortality, the institutions of prophecy and sacrifice or sacrament, the use of sacred books, some conception of sin, forgiveness and atonement are not peculiar to Christianity. This is not disturbing. It is re-assuring. It shews that Christianity touches familiar needs. Nor need any Christian be troubled when he discovers earlier parallels to our Lord's teaching in the Gospels, or that the Lord's Prayer has a resemblance to what are called " The Eighteen Benedictions " of the Jews. The real witness to Christ's teaching is that it, or rather he, has given unity and force and permanence to occasional and transient

glimpses, and that by the Cross he has established " a new and living way." It is the Cross that makes the difference. Here are some words of Dr Bigg, a scholar both erudite and wise—" The study of the great Greek and Roman moralists of the Empire leaves upon my own mind a strong conviction that the fundamental difference between heathenism of all shades and Christianity is to be discovered in the doctrine of Vicarious Sacrifice, that is to say, in the Passion of our Lord. . . . The old logicians used to say that everything should be defined *per genus et differentiam.* Christianity is a religion ; this is its *genus*, that it has in common with all other religions. It is the religion of Vicarious Sacrifice, or of the Cross, this is its *differentia.*"[1]

If these be the terms on which other religions are to have the chance of measuring themselves against the Christian Gospel, we may safely leave the competition open. The Cross is too difficult a burden for any but the Son of God to bear.

The second department of Comparative Religion with which Christianity is concerned is the adjustment of relations with contemporary faiths. There is first of all the question—defence, criticism or condemnation—of Christian Missions in non-Christian countries, and then there are domestic movements, Theosophy, Christian Science, Spiritism, Auto-Suggestion and the like, to be considered.

[1] *The Church's Task in the Roman Empire.*

What is the case for Christian Missions? The case is exactly what it always was, but not at all what it was sometimes said to be. The case follows from belief in Christ. For those who believe that Christ is really the one Saviour, it follows that he deserves to have the allegiance of all men everywhere. And for those who receive the Bible doctrine of the Body of Christ as an organism which will be more and more built up, as more persons, classes and nations find their vocation and begin to occupy their intended place, it follows that Christ not only deserves but needs to have such allegiance. And it follows that the Church of the future, the Christianity of the future, the Christ of the future, will actually be enriched by the new contributions they will make. On the other hand any who may still suppose that the object of Christian Missions is to snatch a few souls from the otherwise inevitable prospect of burning in everlasting fire, or that the object of say, Church of England Missions is to plant the Church of England, with its Thirty-Nine Articles, its Hymns Ancient and Modern, its Ruri-decanal Chapters, and, if possible, its Establishment by law, in Nyassaland and Borneo and Melanesia, will have great difficulty in finding any live Mission that will come up—or down—to their requirements. The modern man-missionary has long ceased to be a gentleman in a frock-coat sitting under a palm-tree and distributing copies of the Bible. If he is in Holy Orders, he is either a resident padre or an itinerant

evangelist. But always, lay or clerical, he takes a large view of his profession. He may be a statesman, an architect, a University professor, a Doctor of Medicine, a psychologist. The woman-missionaries officially are what Sisters and Deaconesses and the staffs of Hospitals and Colleges and Schools are in England. In their spare moments they perform unofficially the work of Guardians, Care Committees, Welfare workers, mothers, sisters, aunts, godmothers and friends.

What is the motive? The motive is this. Believing that there has been only one supreme revelation of God's Nature and God's purpose for the world, they desire to introduce to Christ and to educate in Christ and to assimilate to Christ the peoples whose servants for Christ's sake they are. They do not think that the religions of India are diabolical. Only that they are less than Christ, a difficult, uncharted way, a broken truth, a life that is other than the life indeed. They do not imagine that hell is reserved chiefly for those who have never heard of it. In fact, they are for the most part Modernist enough to refrain from populating or locating hell at all. But the ideal of "in earth as it is in Heaven" seems to them to transcend the colour-line and to demand a policy of catholic experiment. The new relativity of knowledge does not impair the absolute appeal of Christ. It only makes it easier, and more urgent, to translate the appeal into other tongues. This is the real ground of missionary

labours, the ground of truth. It also happens that the growth of new national Churches is the chief hope for the further enlightenment of Christendom itself, and probably the only hope for the salvation of all that is worth saving in the western world. But these are minor and rather selfish considerations. They approximate to the "profitable investment view," and the "necessary policeman view" of Missions. The really important thing is—"They shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free."

The rival philosophies at home are in the strict sense heresies. They have begun by re-asserting some forgotten or little used part of Christianity, its mysticism, its power of healing, its communion of the Saints, the old furniture stored in its psychological basement. They have proceeded, as the early heresies often did, to become separate religions, with creeds, liturgies and priesthoods. Thus, Theosophy began with a mild reminder that God is not to be completely explained by theological definitions. It is at present occupied in cutting loose from history and building a mythical Christ in the air of fancy, and not, where we want him, on the ground. Faith-healing, again, is actually among the most strongly-attested phenomena of primitive Christianity. It never ceased either in Christianity, or in medical science. The observed fact that holy men live long, or that in an epidemic the devoted nurse or doctor is likely to escape infection, is an easily appreciated instance of its working. The

fact that a sot will crumple up when conditions begin to be unfavourable is an example of the converse. The threat that grave and unrepented wickedness in those who go to Communion provokes God " to plague us with divers diseases and with sundry kinds of death " suggests a view of the divine discipline that most of us would like to restate, but, even so, it is only an extreme case of the law that a serene mind makes for a healthy body. There is no heresy, there is in fact the maximum of Christianity, in believing that life has a spiritual basis, and that the predominant partner must and can control, that health is the will of God, and that certain persons, in whom the gift is developed, can help and heal their neighbours. But when it is maintained that evil has no existence, that the influenza is sin and that the Cross can be altogether eliminated from the life of man, the philosophy that maintains such positions has become something other than Christianity.

The only way for Christianity to compete with these philosophies is the way of open competition. An *index expurgatorius* is no good, and pulpit denunciations are no good. Destructive criticism, if it can be made fairly, is in itself good, but it is not certain to receive the consideration of those who are chiefly concerned. The only effective way is to beat the heretics on their own ground, to exhibit Christianity as the thing which supplies more truly, more abundantly, more permanently, the elements of which the heresy claims a monopoly.

The rise of Spiritism is the Nemesis that has come upon the Church for having taken a less than Christian view of life. The Christian ideal is " To see life steadily, and to see it whole." The Church in the earliest centuries thought of death with a beautiful simplicity. The martyrs' death-days were their " birthdays," and dying Christians were committed to the care of the Good Shepherd, whose rod and staff were held to be as comforting in the valley of the shadow as they had been on the mountain-tracks. They were buried with a quiet *Resurgam* on the stone that covered them. Their friends still named them in the ears of God before the altar, and found in the fellowship of the whole Church a thing real enough and large enough to enable them still to know and love and to be known and loved by those who were departed out of this life. The departed were only the calm, unspeaking citizens of another province of the one life in Christ. But the Middle Ages saw the growth of claims to a morbid and fantastic knowledge of the geography and even the economics of the unseen world. The sixteenth century, reacting from excessive pre-occupation with the state after death, cut life in two with a hatchet, and confined the reference of its prayers and consolations at the grave-side to the survivors. To mistake a part for the whole always brings Nemesis. The Reformation was one such Nemesis, and itself led to another. The morbid state of spiritual shell-shock which had been produced in the Middle Ages by the thunders of

the *Dies Iræ*, and the moral deterioration involved by the traffic in vicarious post-phylactics, led to three bleak centuries in which year by year the parish Church was locked and the parish priest was silent on the day of all the dead. Then came the second reaction. The shut door and the dumb priest between them created a heresy which is now an alternative religion. In these circumstances the path of wisdom for the Church is to use for its own enlightenment whatever Science has to say about the nature and capacity of the sub-conscious mind, the possibilities of telepathy and similar abnormal psychic faculties, and to warn all persons, especially those in the lowering and distracting condition of bereavement, that it is dangerous to abandon the consciousness to the play of unknown forces. The path of efficiency and successful competition is to provide as much consolation for the mourner and as much information for the enquirer as Christ has to give. There are some hidden things which the victims of a temporary dislocation or the possessors of an unholy curiosity are overkeen to know. Christ has been silent, and the Church is agnostic, on these points. The Gospel is not an encyclopædia. Our Lord is the Way, the Truth and the Life, not a map, or a crib, or a time-table. The Christian must say, like Macbeth, but with more truth and more consistency,

> I dare do all that may become a man.
> Who dares do more, is none.

If life is a ride through an enchanted forest, it is a false

confidence which arises from having chosen to give fancy names to all the spirits. The real confidence comes only to those who have a Master who has known what it is to die. This Master has gone down to the home of Death and has conquered and converted him, and has warmed the coldness of his hand and sweetened the bitterness of his breath. And death is now an ambassador of Christ. The good spirits in the forest are his servants, and the bad ones scatter at the sign of the Cross.

It is in fact always the Cross that reveals and defeats a false or inadequate belief. The earliest theosophy could not bear the thought that Calvary was real, and later developments have fancified Galilee as well. The belief that health is religion and religion is health does not avail against death, and it does not remedy the only kinds of spiritual disease or misery for which super-human help is really needed. The materializers of spirits, like the Galatian Judaizers of the Pauline Gospel, assume some means of access to God and to Salvation other than the Cross, and impudently patronise the Crucified as an ingenious and precocious amateur.

Lastly, the Cross touches the point at which Auto-suggestion also breaks down. The practice, if it grows "stronger and stronger," will be thought by many to cover the whole ground. It will suggest that God is only your own consciousness, projected and objectified, and that prayer is unnecessary. The suggestion is

not false exactly, because God really is within as well as without, but it is cruelly, tragically inadequate. The " inner man " will help to the limits of his capacity, and it may readily be admitted that we do not yet know what those limits are. But the more you analyse him, the more you find at the deepest base of his existence a need rather than a power. There are situations in which even his experience will not serve. There is that in human nature which needs not only the experience of the whole race, but something more. And the Cross is more. It is the experience of humanity and it is also the experience of God. There are some famous lines of Shelley which suggest that life is perhaps an accident, and certainly a defect—

> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of eternity.

It is also possible to use the image to suggest that life is a thing which can be illuminated, and that the many colours of the reflector interpret, without altogether spoiling, the creative light. The Cross is the supreme revelation of the character of God. It is reflected by all those whose life has been real enough and complete enough to include some suffering. So it is the white radiance of the love of God, shining upon us through the many-coloured dome of the life of all the people who have ever really lived since the beginning of the world.

CHAPTER XI

CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS

A GREAT many people profess to believe that Christianity and politics have nothing to do with one another. But they are mistaken. They do not really believe it. The complaint sometimes made that the Vicar's sermons are much too political only means that the preacher has allowed it to be perceived that his politics are different from those of the complainer. During the war most congregations demanded, received and liked a large measure of political preaching. But they did not know what they were getting. It was only on the comparatively rare occasions when the politics were those with which they disagreed, that they recognised the political nature of the sermon. Then they grumbled. It is the same now. Just as recruiting sermons were popular in 1914 and 1915 and allotment sermons in 1916 and 1917, so now League of Nations sermons or National Economy sermons are tolerated. Why ? Because they say what most of the congregation are willing, and indeed expect, to hear. But Education sermons, Coal Strike sermons, Peace Conference sermons, above all, Ireland or Russia sermons are dangerous. A preacher who chooses such

topics is almost certain to say the wrong thing. In that case he is political.

The real fact is that most sermons are not nearly political enough. They do not get down to what Mr Wells used to call " the keen edge of life." The department of life which they do reach, with a perfectly sincere but sometimes rather conventional and unconvincing touch, is that individual or domestic province where personal dedication and the private virtues spring. On prayer and early-rising, on Bible study and purity of thought, they are sound even if not always very illuminating. Enlarge the range, and you will find that on definite Church teaching in Elementary Schools, on the necessity, if not on the complete consequences, of going to Communion, on part at least of the overseas missionary campaign, on an uncompromising but rather limited standard of truthfulness, honesty and a host of other virtues, on a good many, if not all, of the duties of school-children, wage-earners and members of families, on the duty of employers to be considerate to those whom they actually employ, they teach with courage and effect. But if you take the whole range of Christian duty, you will find that on trusting God utterly, on loving truth above all things, on the necessity, and meaning, of education, on national educational policy, on that larger interpretation of Christian honesty which may be called social justice or political truthfulness, on international co-operation, on the real scope of Christian Missions to

India and Japan, on the perpetual duty of all Christians to outrage public opinion by championing the victims of Society, on these things too many of us are disappointingly inadequate or impotently silent.

And yet these questions touch the more important half of life. They interest profoundly the most intelligent people, they are subjects on which the opinions of people in general are sharply divided, they are very difficult. And inasmuch as they are very large and general questions, and affect the lives of innumerable persons who are elsewhere or are not yet born, they need beyond all subjects to have the inspiration of an ideal brought to bear upon them. By ideal I mean not some far-off vision which we hope some day to reach. I mean a fact which God has created, and has given to us as a motive and instrument of life. There is a doctrine which holds the desired ideal. The doctrine of the Incarnation is the doctrine that God himself assumed human nature and lived for a while under the conditions of genuine human life. His name was called Jesus, and he was in all points tempted like as we are. The complete manhood of Jesus was not destroyed by his heavenly provenance, his spiritual paternity. The few years of his life were the pattern, and not only the pattern but also the redemption of the whole lives of all men and all women. His cruel and violent death and the events which immediately followed it, have always been found by all who love his name to have an effect upon themselves. They are

not merely incidents in the history of one person in the past. What happened to Jesus did not happen to Jesus only. The virtue of it is somehow communicated to others. We may reverse his own words and say that, inasmuch as it was done unto him, it was done also unto us. And we can take his words in their own order and say that, inasmuch as men live in homes and go to work and are concerned with politics and have in private and in public opportunities of serving one another, the whole of their work and service belongs utterly to him. Behind all their life is its sublime Redeemer, he who was called on earth the Son of Man. Who then shall limit the most exalted, the most far-reaching estimate of the scope of Christian citizenship? It is too late to pretend that religion is not concerned with all that flesh and blood can ever do, because the task of making a perfect use of flesh and blood is one that has not been disdained by God himself. As Ruskin said more than fifty years ago, "God is in the poorest man's cottage—it is advisable that he should be well housed." I do not know exactly how much Ruskin meant by his words, but all that they are capable of meaning is true.

But there is even more than that. The connection between Christ and human life is not merely a dogma of theology, it is part of the day's work. The Church is the Body of Christ, and it is the function of the Church to intensify and extend the operation of the Spirit or Christ-life that is within it, until every member

of the world-organism has taken his true place in the Christ-body, and every thought has been brought into harmony with the Christ-mind. This means the Christianizing of all human relations, between parents and children, buyer and seller, teacher and taught, director and labourer, government and citizens, neighbour and neighbour, nation and nation. How then can politics be excluded from the thought and prayer of Christian people and from the sermons of Christian preachers?

Mr A. E. W. Mason in his admirable story *Running Water* reminds us that there is a law that, if you can do anything, you must do it if thereby you can save a life. The girl in the story had been badly brought up and did not at first know the law. She was impressed by the fact that Swiss mountain guides volunteered to join in a rescue party. But she was ashamed that she had needed to be told, and from that time she understood. And indeed the law is undeniable. How then can we escape the duty of applying it every day? And if we apply it we are immersed in politics at once. We come against something that is integral in the present constitution of society. A very large part of the whole fabric of society is based upon a principle that Christians are pledged to deny and overturn. The principle is that it is legitimate to profit by the fears of others.

Very few of us want to do this, and we do it as a rule unconsciously or half-consciously. For instance, we

feel relieved when there is no strike in coal or engineering or any other trade. But as things are, the inward meaning of a quiet spell, with no strikes, is very likely that the workers are for the time being so much afraid of unemployment or short time or the reduction of earnings below the level of reasonable existence, that they dare not make any protests. In fact, the real reason for a great deal of what the middle class criticise and resent in the working class is due to fear, the terrible, ever-present fear which a weekly wage-earner must always have of poverty, and, in the end, starvation. The wage-earner has his vices and his weaknesses, like any other class, but his critics should remember that he lives always on the edge of a week's notice; he cannot overdraw at the bank; he cannot assume credit over the counter with a wave of his hand or an airy reference to a cheque in due course. Moreover there may come at any moment some act of a distant, controlling hand or some casual shifting of industrial currents which will have the effect of putting thousands of workers out of work. Industry has become so specialised that when a new invention[1] or the passing of a fashion ends the demand for some particular process, an individual worker who all his life has performed some particular process thousands of times every day and has never done anything else, may be left at the

[1]The new invention in the long run will cheapen production and help the pockets of the public. And some firms are accustomed to protect their workers against depressions of this kind. But the whole industrial machine needs to be humanized before it can be said that a new invention is likely to do all good and no harm.

age of sixty, unwanted and too old to acquire a new function. And Society, rich and poor, the non-wage-earners and the other members of the wage-earning classes, by buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, live on those fears.

Another instance of oppression, in some ways even more pitiful, is the exploitation by other classes and other members of their own class, of the more defenceless and less self-assertive members of the middle class. It may be true that certain members of this section of the community, owing to mistakes made by their parents over their education and to their own pride, have become comparatively useless, but, even so, it is a horrid thing that society should live by levying blackmail on their pathetic zeal to maintain a respectable appearance.

In fact, we are all in it. Consumers are the victims of the avarice of those who pull the strings of production and distribution. And consumers themselves help to tighten the knots round the necks of those who are involved in the strings. I am not saying that all competition is wrong. But the black competition on which modern society is based is altogether wrong. All Christians who find themselves living on the fears of others ought to have what Bishop Gore has called a " permanently uneasy conscience," until the tyranny —their tyranny—is overpast. If human beings are dying at an earlier age than God intended in order that I may eat and drink what I like or wear the kind

of hat that suits my face, the law that I must do what I can to save a life comes into operation. And with this law comes the intrusion of Christian people into politics.

It comes for two reasons. The first is that it is not enough for me to begin to eat simpler food or to go hatless to my work. Dangerous, life-destroying industries must either be prohibited or somehow made innocuous, or if (as in the case of coal-mining) the industry seems quite essential to the life of the nation, and it seems frankly impossible to make it quite innocuous, it must at all costs be made as innocuous as human care can make it. This requires Parliamentary action. The grumbles of the shareholder when he receives his diminished dividend and of paterfamilias when he receives his increased bill must be silenced by the impersonal decision of us all. The shareholder and paterfamilias can be persuaded to agree to the expensive precautions when the case is put to them on general and public grounds. And the second reason is that the community must assert itself not only against the natural self-seeking and tendency to grumbling of most individuals, but against the definite cruelty of a few. Not many people are really tyrants and oppressors, but a few are, and one of the evil results of the present system of society is that the few who are of evil will can hold up the whole process and fetter the not very powerful impulses of the good-natured, careless majority. Part of the task of helping us all

to be as honest as in our better moments we should like to be will have been accomplished, when it has been made quite clear that swindling does not pay. But this can only be made clear to those of ill-will by the help of Parliament, the policeman, and the judge.

The need for the energetic participation of Christians in the discussion of international affairs is even more urgent. More urgent, because the dangers there are on a colossal scale, and foreign affairs really include home affairs. Let us suppose that someone of fair education has watched the progress of world-politics since 1918 and has tried to make up his own mind about such questions as the proper treatment of Germany, Russia, Ireland and Egypt, on purely Christian grounds. Such an one must feel now that what he wanted in 1919 or 1921 was really right, that public opinion has slowly moved since then towards those positions, and that some of our political leaders, who knew the facts all the time better than anybody and are supposed to guide the public in the right way, are now beginning to admit the positions—but that now it is too late. The case for forming and uttering a Christian judgment on such matters is overwhelming.

The difficulties are enormous. There is first the fact that Christians are not agreed. The school to which I belong is tempted to accuse the Christians who hold different political views of not having applied their Christianity to their political opinions. But provided that they assert that they have done this, it is not

legitimate to question their honesty. And the result is that there is and will long continue to be an acute division of opinion among Christians. Not to mention the more extreme sections, some of us agree with the "Manchester Guardian" and some with the "Daily Telegraph."

Then there is the fact that the Christian judgment, as such, is not competent to cover the whole ground. It is quite clear that the acquisitive basis of modern society is ungodly, and that we ought not to live on the fears of others. But the re-arrangement of society, the substitution of co-operation for black competition as a principle and of love for fear as a motive, is a process of enormous complexity. Merely to draft a scheme on paper would require encyclopædic knowledge of the natural sciences, economics and psychology—and also a great deal of paper. To carry a scheme through in even so short a time as fifty years would require universal willingness to sacrifice prejudice and profit to the divine wisdom. The Church has no monopoly, has not even a very imposing share of the skill required, and no control over the wills of vast numbers of those whose help is essential. All that the Church has is knowledge of principles of conduct and command of a certain spiritual influence which guides such as are willing to be guided. The Church cannot say, "this or that precise form of Socialism or any other 'ism' would be the ideal stage for the Kingdom of God." Nor can it say, "Everybody will from Advent

Sunday next do so-and-so." It can only say, "The present constitution of Society is to be condemned. Brotherhood is what is wanted. We submit that if the skill of the experts and the experiments of the public could be turned along the lines that we hereby indicate, the result would be a more brotherly condition of affairs. And if you are willing to be guided in that direction, we put our resources at your disposal."

The final difficulty is that "politics" mean, in practice, "party politics." It is not possible for the Church always to confine itself to the enunciation of bare principles. We have done that again and again, and it has had almost no result. You must indicate some ways in which your principles will apply. The principle that good sanitation is the will of God is perfectly true. But it has an application to the present policy of the Urban or Rural District Council. "Nations should live in brotherhood" is no less true, and far more important. But it has an application to Tariffs, Wars, Reparation problems, Disarmament, and Colonial expansion. These questions are all matter of party politics. Elections are fought upon them. The Church, supposing it ever did come down unitedly upon one side of them, would put itself in danger of being tied to the wheels of a party-chariot. Moreover, a clergyman, known to be a supporter of one party, finds it difficult to be fair in his pulpit language. He must of course himself belong to whatever party or school he thinks most Christian, and he must face whatever

odium is involved in that. And he must try to indicate in his sermons the application of Christian principles to concrete facts and actual issues. But he will find it really difficult to do this without being seemingly unfair to some of his hearers. He will quite inevitably seem unfair to some of the less sensible, but he ought not to seem so to the more reasonable. If he does, he has probably misused the advantage of the pulpit. The utterances of the pulpit ought to be such that, however novel or even revolutionary, they cannot be denied by reasonable people on purely Christian grounds.

If, for example, the clergyman is a member of the Labour Party, he can hardly help knowing that in past years many clergymen, being members of the Conservative party, have not scrupled to deliver Conservative sermons. But two wrongs do not make a right. It will often be suggested to him that he has an opportunity to redress the balance, and he will be pressed to advocate e.g., the Capital Levy, from the pulpit. He would not be deterred from doing this by the fact that he is probably not himself a capitalist and would be accused of dealing airily with other people's property. He must be ready to face accusations of that kind. What really will deter him is the fact that the desirability of a capital levy is an economic question, and the pulpit has no criteria of its own by which to decide such questions. Most so-called economic questions are also moral, but the question of whether it is better to

pay for the war by means of appropriation of private capital or appropriation of private incomes seems to be purely economic. The moral judgments which he may pronounce are these—" Having had the war, we must pay for it. We must all help to pay, according to our capacity. If it is constitutionally decided that a capital levy is the best way, then those who have capital must submit to it, and must do their best ' to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods.' "

The ultimate situation towards which the words of individual preachers, the thinking of Christians, the verdicts of Church Assemblies, ought to be directed is one in which the Christian judgment on such controverted issues as have a moral side will be accepted by all parties as the independent expression of a genuine desire for righteousness. I do not think myself that it would be a good thing for the disputing parties to pledge themselves beforehand to abide by the Christian judgment. Supposing it could by any means be obtained, it would be dangerous for the Church to have *carte blanche* beforehand. It would be too much like the old Hildebrandine despotism. But the ideal would have been reached if the Church were to be recognised as having no private axe to grind, and as being actuated by no other motive than to ascertain and to proclaim to all concerned the redeeming and constructive will of God. That being recognised, the work of the Church for years past in the Parishes and in the Press would have so instructed public opinion that

a perfectly fair and legitimate pressure would be brought to bear on the competing political parties. They need not accept the verdict, but it would be difficult for any of them to pass it by with contempt and at the same time to retain the respect of the public.

CHAPTER XII

SOME EXPERIMENTS

THE chief difficulty in the way of making experiments in the Church of England is our general lack of faith. Or perhaps it would be more strictly accurate to say that the chief difficulty is the rather poor and dull character of the faith that is in most of us. We are accustomed to say crudely that the age of miracles is past. The statement is happily not quite accurate, but in so far as the age of miracles is passing, the age of experiments is passing also. All miracles are experiments. And many other things—the devotional developments that led to the practice of Benediction, the moral intuitions that built up the Friends' doctrine of non-resistance, the emotional appeals of Whitefield, the classes of Wesley, the Oxford Movement at the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria, the incorrigible honesty that produced Essays and Reviews, Lux Mundi, the Girton Conference and other revolutionary manifestos—all these were experiments. In earlier days the first preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch, its sanction at the Council of Jerusalem ("It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us"), the Nicene Creed, the Mendicant Orders, the

Reformation, were no less experimental. No one knew at the beginning to what lengths they would grow, but the experimenters had faith enough to let themselves go on what seemed to be the true way. Not all the things mentioned have succeeded. None of them have succeeded completely. But if we could make experiments to-day with even the half of the faith that was in Saint Francis, or the Friends, or Wesley, or the Lux Mundi School, we could afford to take the risk of failure.

Desirable experiments can be grouped under various heads. Among those of an obviously Catholic kind are the following.

We need a great increase in the number of persons living under religious vows. Chiefly because such an increase would be a sure sign that the Church is spiritually thriving, but also because there is an immense amount of devotion, education and cure of souls, which cannot be done in any other way. There is room here for experiment. But first let it be clear that the increase is not to be engineered by wit or man's device. It is a matter of divine vocation. Still, vocation is apprehended by faith, and faith, though it is a gift, not to be created by human means, yet need not be crushed and extinguished, as it is sometimes, by the worldly advice of parents and advisers. There are plenty of men and women in the middle or later years of life, who through their own ignorance and mismanagement by others have frustrated the vocation that God had for them. It can easily be seen now by

observers who are both close and sympathetic that the divine plan for them really was that they should live the religious life.

The need for experiment arises in this way. The life is one of the choice fruits of Catholicism, but it need not involve a return to mediævalism. In fact, the actual experiment that needs to be made is the founding of new orders, with the mediæval or rather the eternal spirit, but modern in outlook and method, an attempt to discover what modification of the Rule of Saint Benedict will best meet actual contemporary needs, without imperilling the essential quality of the religious life. The new methods will have somehow to preserve the character which has historically been produced by the threefold vow of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience in the strict sense in which those "Counsels" have hitherto been interpreted. They must somehow preserve the beautiful, unworldly and yet most human, practical and sympathetic disposition which is called detachment. It may be that any considerable modifications of the Rule would spoil the product. That would be fatal. If that is so, there must not be any considerable modifications. On the other hand, the result of experiment may shew that the discipline has been unduly hard, and that a modernised community with a freer way of life, loses very little and gains a great deal.[1] In any case we need a great increase in the

[1]There have been some experiments in Men's Communities. One of great interest and importance, of which I happen to know something, is the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, Cambridge. But

number of religious, and to that end experiments must be directed.

Another Catholic experiment which is already in operation, but needs to be tried by different people and on a larger scale is in the region of the use of the Blessed Sacrament outside the service of Holy Communion. It is well known that in a great many parishes a portion of the Sacrament is reserved from day to day after the service, and remains in the Church, available for being carried at any moment to the sick. This is a very ancient practice, and all who have had experience of it will probably agree that it is most convenient, and that there is no danger of superstition. Further, in some parishes the place where the Sacrament is reserved is known; a light burns before it; and some of the faithful are accustomed to come to that part of the Church in order to say their prayers there rather than elsewhere. The testimony of those who follow this practice is that in such a place there is a peculiar sense of the divine presence. Sometimes organized devotions are made in this part of the Church. They consist of

there has been very little experiment in Communities for women, though of course some Sisterhoods are freer than others. One of the things which the Church needs to discover is whether there is room among the purposes of God for a Sisterhood, which shall be a real Sisterhood, but organised and disciplined more freely than according to the traditional method, and yet not so loose and unmonastic as some of the existing women's associations which are not communities. It may be that the traditional way is the only way. But the Church will only discover this by putting it to the test of practice. After all, the history of monasticism from the time of S. Antony and Pachomius has been full of experiment, a series of tentative reforms. Some failed, but many justified themselves in course of time.

hymns and prayers of a simple, evangelical character. Sometimes the priest lifts up the Sacrament in a monstrance, and with it blesses the people. This is called Benediction.

What is the right and wrong of all this ? The simple practice of setting aside at the open administration some portion of the Sacrament, to be carried, either at once or after a convenient interval or on a sudden call at any time that day, to a sick person, is clearly desirable. It brings the sick person into fellowship with the Church in a homely Christian way. The further developments seem to constitute a case for extended experiment. The custom of saying private prayers in that part of the Church where the Sacrament has been ascertained to be is as a matter of fact impossible to prevent, and has much in its favour. Its dangers are that it may encourage an unduly localised conception of the presence of God, and a false condemnation of what are sometimes called " empty Churches." It has also been asserted that the practice leads to a decreased sense of the importance of being present at the Eucharist and receiving Communion, but this seems to be a mistaken assertion.

The organized devotions—I speak from a very minute experience—are attractive. My doubt of their propriety is theological. I am not sure that the theology, the sacramental doctrine, implied in such devotions, is true. Most of the defences of the practice that I have read seem to be content to say " It is a pleasing

devotion. People like it. It makes them feel that our Lord is near." They do not engage in real theological discussion, that is, in the search for truth. But mere preference, or the mere experience, however genuinely felt, of one type of person only, do not by themselves convince. We need more evidence. I do not know how the uncertainty can be resolved unless more attention is paid to the theology of the subject, and unless experiments are made on a larger scale than hitherto. I do not think that the suggestion which I am going to make is very likely to be carried out, and I have no intention of carrying it out in the Parish Church at Bolton. But if in a number of parishes, above all in those where clergy and people alike are especially alert to guard against the entrance of any magical element into their Eucharistic belief, such experiments could be made, then those like myself, who are at present perplexed, would have much larger *data* on which to form a conclusion. After all, the aim in every parish is to bring souls to Christ by any and every way that is true, and anyone who believes that God guides the Church, may rest assured that whatever is according to God's will is likely to thrive in the long run, and that whatever is against it will decay.[1]

[1]The fact that the service of Benediction is not ancient, but of mediæval western origin does not seem very relevant. Supposing it is on other grounds advisable, we ought to borrow it, as we have borrowed the Three Hours' Service on Good Friday from the Romans, and many other things from other quarters. It is however a relevant fact that in no part of the Catholic Church (except here and there in the Church of England !) is the service of Benediction ever held without the permission of the Bishop.

Among experiments of an Evangelical character must be included anything—or almost anything—which would break down the formalism which grips the Church of England in a strait-waistcoat. There is of course plenty of room for forms. The ordinary service should be liturgical, always dignified, and often magnificent. But from time to time there must be some thoroughly homely services. Above all there must be occasions on which the congregation do things themselves, ask or answer questions, pray aloud, ejaculate, come in and go out when they like, sit, kneel or stand as they like. The divine response to the hymn *Veni Creator* is by no means always violent. But sometimes it is, and sometimes it acts on the human material available in such a way as to make the resultant conduct uncouth and bizarre. In fact very often the result is what many nice people would call vulgar. I have indeed an uncomfortable feeling that we are far from ready for the day when a modern Amos, some shepherd from the hills, some miner, some leader of the unemployed, will rise up in the congregation and declare aloud some forgotten part of the whole counsel of God. I fear that neither the Vicar nor the Verger are ready for that day.

On the same lines it would be an incalculable gain to the Church if by common consent we could procure the total abolition of meaningless ceremonial. Ceremonial is in itself an intensely valuable thing. The Catholic Church, the Navy and Army, the Legal Profession, the Masons and the Boy Scouts are among the

organizations which have perceived and used what is a quite ineradicable instinct in human nature. But there are many respects in which the ceremonial practised in our Churches has missed the real point. Meaningless ceremonies abound—processions which lead nowhere, elevations of the alms-dish, the custom of kneeling while the liturgical Epistle is being read, of intoning or monotoning parts of the service which are intended to be said in the natural voice, the singing of the vestry-prayer, the manner in which the people are prevented from ever saying " amen " in a simple way, because the organ always comes booming in—all these mistakes are made in what are called moderate Churches. In those which are more anxious to carry out Catholic ceremonial, things are often done which under the Prayer Book system are without meaning. Some of them are " Catholic," in the sense that they correspond to things which are done, not inappropriately, in other parts of the Catholic Church, but are meaningless as they are actually done among ourselves. Thus, if the service is in Latin, a kneeling attitude for the server during the Nicene Creed is perhaps as reasonable as any other. But it is quite unreasonable when the Creed is said in English, and the priest and people stand. It is also unreasonable that when private devotions are used by priest and server before the Eucharist they should be said in loud tones while the greater part of the service itself is inaudible. Against all this, and much more which occurs here and there,

the true Evangelical position is clear. Let nothing be done in Church which is not capable of being quite easily explained to the congregation. It is difficult on this principle for any liberal Evangelical to object to the priest washing his fingers shortly before he gives Communion to the people, because, in the light of Psalm xxvi, 6,[1] the symbolism of the action is so obvious, and it is in itself a cleanly practice. But it is difficult to see how any Evangelical of any sort can refrain from disliking some of the ceremonies occasionally practised with the foreign head-dress known as a biretta.

Once more, an Evangelical experiment greatly needed is the complete abolition of clericalism. I use the word non-theologically. The quite different term, sacerdotalism, has been to some extent discussed already.[2] But clericalism means any and every kind of clerical affectation, jargon and pomposity. It is not quite so prevalent as is supposed by the authors of some of the lighter productions of contemporary journalism, fiction and drama. But it is all too prevalent. Too many of us clasp our hands and put our heads on one side, and say things that are not worth saying in tones that ought never to be heard. To be professional is excellent. It means knowing your job and doing it with as much directness as is compatible with Christian love. But to be precious is intolerable. With the single exception

[1] I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord : and so will I go to thine altar.

[2] See above, p. 59.

of the professionally hearty manner, the professionally dulcet manner is perhaps the most objectionable of all possible kinds of clericalism. I do not know if it would really be contended that those who particularly describe themselves as Evangelicals are the most free from this vice. But it is quite certainly a principle of real Evangelicalism to pray and strive to be delivered from it. It does immense harm to the estimation in which the Gospel of our Lord is held.

Finally, one more experiment which the Evangelical party in the Church greatly desire to see extended is Evening Communion. I have been told by a very enlightened leader of that School that many of his friends would co-operate with far more zeal in the task of making it clear that the Eucharist is the principal Christian service, if the Anglo-Catholics would modify their objection to Evening Communion. The difficulty which I feel here for myself is considerable. I am quite convinced that the traditional early hour of the morning is much the best. I believe in fasting Communion,[1] and though it is not at all impossible to go without food till mid-day on Sunday, I should find it very difficult to carry on till evening. But on the other hand, there does not seem to be a very great difference in principle between communion in the evening and the communions made by many good and devout persons at

[1]It is often said that Fasting Communion is a rule of the Catholic Church. No doubt it is, but the statement is puzzling to those who know nothing of Church rules, except what they find in the Prayer Book. So I prefer to speak of the authority of an undoubted tradition, which for myself I accept *con amore*.

mid-day, and if the concession asked for is nothing more than toleration, and to refrain from calling men bad Christians because they sometimes communicate in the evening, it can be made at once. In actual fact, I do not consider that the concession is so important as those who wish for it believe. The result of the experiments made hitherto is not, as far as I know, very successful. And I am disposed to think, that with increased knowledge of Catholic authority, and of psychological facts, the demand will not continue to be made.

Experiments in a Liberal direction have to some extent been dealt with already. They include of course all the experimental thinking and writing which is involved in the progressive study of theology. The actual reforms suggested are mainly of two kinds, modification of the theological subscription required from the clergy, and revision of the forms of public worship. For the clergy, it has already been suggested that they should no longer be required to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles,[1] or to join with the congregation in reciting the *Quicunque vult.* On the other hand it does seem to me essential that they should join in reciting the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds—not

[1]This is not desired by some who call themselves Liberal Churchmen, i.e., by those Erastian, latitudinarian Churchmen whose real affinities are with the sixteenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rather than with the twentieth. But when I speak of Liberal Churchmen, I am thinking, not of such persons, but of a different School.

necessarily with the same frequency as at present, but publicly and regularly. Prosecution, or the casting of the charge of heresy, on the ground of novel interpretation of the Creeds, must be postponed to the last possible moment. It is almost always better to trust that the priest whose continuance in the Ministry has become really impossible to justify, will of himself retire from a position to which he is unfortunately no longer suited. In the meantime argument must be met by argument.

As to our forms of worship, there is no doubt that we need drastic revision of the Prayer Book. At the risk of losing some of its beauty, and some of its dignity, we must make the language intelligible.

And, even more than that, we must make the ideas behind the language such as will have a fair chance of being real to the best of the worshippers. It is not possible here to go into great detail, but, broadly speaking, it is essential that the prayers used should express, and should indeed far transcend, the conception of God and of Christian duty which are actually entertained by the best Christians among us. And here the Prayer Book is admirable, but not perfect. The constant use in the Collects of the conception of God as "Almighty" is not in accordance with the truest and most spiritual conceptions of the divine nature that are available for us. I do not in the least suggest that we should deny or obscure the doctrine of Transcendence, or Divine Sovereignty. It appears

to me to be an essential part of theological truth. But many would be helped if some at least of the prayers began in other ways. I suggest a few out of many possibilities—" Eternal Father, strong to save," " Father of all, with whom is no respect of persons," " Eternal Wisdom, Teacher of all Truth," " Eternal Love, in whom we live and move and have our being." Again, the constant petition to be delivered from danger, affliction and tribulation has not the true Christian balance. It is an element in prayer, and, as such, it has our Lord's own sanction, and is evidently necessary. But it is not a good thing for spiritual development that it should be put so constantly before us. The real aim of worship is to move the worshippers to contemplate, not their own needs, or even the needs of others, but the glory of God, the Kingdom of Christ, the illuminating, converting and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. That is why the " Litany of Labour "[1] is a better devotion than the Church Litany. It keeps the picture of our Lord constantly in the mental vision of the worshippers. Once this is established and accepted as the necessary spiritual foundation of all worship, intercession is perceived to be an essential part of worship and work an essential consequence.

[1]The Litany of Labour is composed in part of prayers like this :

Jesus, calling them that labour and are heavy laden ;
Jesus, in whom is no respect of persons ;
Jesus, companion of the outcast.

It is printed (by its author, Dr. Dearmer) in *The Sanctuary*, or can be obtained in leaflet form.

It occurs, with a number of other very beautiful offices, in a little book called *Cambridge Offices and Orisons* (Mowbray).

Finally, the repetition of the Ten Commandments seriously hinders the promotion of a true Christian knowledge of God. The Commandments present a Hebrew conception which God has himself replaced by another. They assert that the universe was created in six days, and that therefore Saturday is our weekly Holy Day, and that its most important duty is to abstain from work. They assist the impression that the call of Christian duty is a series of prohibitions, and that a man's wife is one of his chattels, second in importance to his house. It is of course possible for worshippers to interpret the commandments, as the Scottish Prayer Book puts it, "according to the spiritual import of each," and it is the duty of communicants to apply to them the interpretative teaching of the "duties" in the Catechism. But this sort of Christianizing, as far as may be, of Hebraic injunctions, ought to be done for us by the Prayer Book.

So much for re-statement and reinterpretation. In the direction of enrichment there are vast and splendid possibilities. We use already, to our great advantage, the liturgical treasures amassed by Leo, Gelasius, Gregory and many more. It is mistrust of God and false economy not to enrich our Common Prayer with whatever we can gather of the harvest of the prophets of our own or of any previous day.

There is yet another region of experiment, not part of the specific programme of any one of the three

dominating schools in the Church of England, but one of great importance, which excites strong feeling. It is the use which should be made of the ministry of women. There are here two main questions, permission to preach and access to the priesthood. The first, apart from prejudice, is surely simple. The right to deliver a sermon in a Church should depend on three things, ability to preach, which is a gift, a licence from the Bishop, and an invitation from the incumbent. Anyone who is a Christian, and can preach the Gospel to the spiritual and intellectual advantage of the hearers, ought to be allowed, and encouraged, to do so. Some can preach, and some cannot. Some want to preach, and some do not. If any person wants to preach and can preach, the sex of the person does not seem to make any difference. A competent lay-woman should be licensed by the Bishop on precisely the same terms as competent lay-men are sometimes licensed now. It is natural and reasonable that the sermon in a Church should ordinarily be preached by those clergymen who have the cure of souls in the parish. But priest and prophet are not identical terms. If help that will be really useful is forthcoming from any quarter, why should it not be used?

Admission to the priesthood (and consequent eligibility for the episcopate) is another matter. The reasons against it are as follows. There have never been any women-priests in the Catholic Church. The priesthood is not a thing that belongs only to the

Church of England. There is a strong instinct of repulsion in (I should conjecture) about ninety per cent. of the Church of England, and one hundred per cent. of the Roman and Eastern Churches, against any such innovation. Further, it is commonly said (but I do not know how such a statement can be verified) that a woman is not capable of receiving Holy Orders in the historical, Catholic sense of that term. Finally, it is, I think, admitted that such difficulties (not scandals, which are very rare indeed) as occasionally arise, because the priest and a penitent are of opposite sexes, would be increased if the priest were a woman and some of the penitents were men.[1]

These are strong reasons. Against them, there is the fact that there are some women, about whom it is easy to feel that they would make good priests. There is the more important fact that the development of female activity and female capacity has been till lately so much hindered, and has advanced so suddenly in a few years, that we can hardly pretend to know finally what women are and are not capable of doing. And there is the stimulating, faith-provoking challenge which is sometimes flung down before the Church—"You say it is against the will of God. But how can you know that, till you have tried? 'If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if

[1] It is sometimes suggested that women-priests should hear the confessions of women only. But this seems to involve the abandonment of what has been advanced by supporters as a principle. The status of the woman-priest would not then be that of the priesthood, but of a new and limited order.

it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.' "

My own conclusion is, that the arguments in favour of it are impressive, but not convincing. The whole question is a very thorny one, and I have no doubt that in trying to consider it fairly and reasonably I have alienated a good many readers on both sides, by going too far and by not going far enough. But, sorry as I am to offend anyone, I am much more concerned not to sin against the light. And it seems to me, who am something of a feminist, something of an experimentalist, and naturally disposed to think that an unpopular cause is very likely to be right, that no sin against the Holy Ghost is involved in saying, " We cannot move till some stronger reasons in favour of the proposal have been set against the historical and other reasons which are marshalled on the other side."

Short of the priesthood, there is some scope for ministerial work, against which stands only prejudice. Except in a few backward Dioceses the Women's Diaconate is an established and accepted thing, and the value of it is quite beyond dispute. I am not much interested in the abstract question of the relation of the women's Diaconate to that of men, but there is room for further enquiry and action based on its results. In any case there seems no real reason why a competent woman, Deaconess or otherwise, should not lead a congregation, consisting not of women and girls only, but of anybody who happens to be there, in prayer,

liturgical or extempore, or joint vocal petitions or thanksgivings, or whatever form of devotion is desired. There seems no reason why a woman should not serve at the altar or carry a cross or banner in a procession. The distinction commonly drawn between what Sisters, Deaconesses and other women constantly do at the altar before or after the service, and the custom of actually serving the priest during his ministration, is quite untenable. It is ridiculous to suppose that an educated Christian woman of mature years cannot do what is constantly done by young boys of unformed character and untested faith.

One final experiment, most essential, in the same province, is a financial one. Most women-workers are very gravely under-paid.

All these experiments in the direction of utilising the help of women in the Church are to be undertaken, not in the interests of women-workers, or even of the women of the Church. They are not to be undertaken because hundreds of educated women are abandoning the Church and thousands of them are condemning it on the ground that it gives them no scope. They are to be undertaken in the interests of the Church itself. It is a shame that the cause of our Lord and of his Church should not have at its disposal all the spiritual resources that are available.

CHAPTER XIII

REUNION

THE casual observer, viewing "the Churches" from a detached but not hostile standpoint, is offended by their divided and too controversial look. An impatient "Let them agree among themselves and then come and talk to me" is the first and sometimes the only comment that he makes. As far as it goes, it is fair enough, and it is certainly a wholesome criticism for the criticised to overhear. But it does not as a rule touch the real point. It does not go far enough. A great many of the critics would be satisfied by something that is much less than satisfactory. It is not really enough to desire that Christian communities should cease to have open disputes with one another, that their preachers should from time to time exchange pulpits, and that on certain notable occasions and anniversaries there should be held what are called United Services. If all that were achieved to-morrow, those Christians who now feel most acutely the shame and burden of disunion would still find themselves only on the threshold of the problem. They would still be confronted with those inexorable and humiliating words—"That they all may be one; as

thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

It is the plain man's perpetual failing to suppose that by removing, modifying or concealing symptoms you really heal the disease. When, for example, he discusses industrial unrest, he often sounds as if he thought only in terms of surface symptoms. He would like to see employers and employed get on better together, and whenever it has become quite obvious that they are getting on badly, it occurs to him that a round-table conference would be a good idea. But he has not considered those fundamental questions, the status of the workmen and the control of the industry, which must be faced and solved before any permanent settlement can be attained. The same thing happens in the sphere of international relations. The public wakes up to their importance when the crisis has already arisen. When war is on the point of being declared, we remark what a pity it is that things were ever allowed to go so far, and we wish that the League of Nations had really got under way. Our apprehension of the problems is superficial, and too late.

In the same way questions of Christian Reunion should be dealt with in peace-time. In fact, they will only be settled after a long period of peace. And during that period all concerned, without disguising their own peculiarities, must have been co-operating to find, not the ingenious formula which will penetrate or

circumvent the trust-deeds and baffle the logic of the lawyers, but something constructive, a way to the organic unity which will contain and do justice to all the elements of available man-power. In other words, the Church of the future, immeasurably greater and more glorious than anything which at present exists, must include the whole positive contribution of all the existing Christian communities.

We can all make a case for our own contributions. The difficult thing is to do justice to prospects which would have the effect of altering the balance, resetting the orientation, and exhibiting in a larger company and a fresh proportion and perhaps diminished importance, the contributions that are made and therefore considered supremely valuable by ourselves. The path of the reformer who wishes to be without prejudice and to consider only what seem to him to be necessary principles, is a narrow and a thorny track. He is not likely to be crowned with roses as he threads his way along it. There is great probability that any particular suggestions will be thought hopelessly inadequate by some and dangerously unpatriotic by others.

A belief which must be assumed is that Churchmanship is an essential of Christianity. With wholehearted undenominationalism, if it anywhere exists as a religious force, it is not possible to treat. If Christianity be union with Christ—and it is the one satisfactory definition—the only way of having such union is to be a member of his Body, the Church.

Institutionalism is of the essence of Christianity. However personally reluctant we may be to draw lines, however willing to acknowledge that lines drawn may require qualification, however much impressed by the existence and the undoubted Christianity of the Society of Friends, there is a line which has been drawn by the Bible and by history. It is that of Baptism.

Statements about the necessity of Baptism should be positive, intended in an inclusive sense. Negative corollaries should anyhow be postponed as long as possible, and perhaps not drawn at all. When we are reminded of the blunt unsubtle ecclesiasticism of an earlier period, we prefer to translate its negatives into the more tenable, if less logical language of affirmation. Thus we render Cyprian's *Nulla salus extra ecclesiam* in some such way as this—"The Bible teaches, and Christian experience confirms the doctrine, that you ought to be baptized, because Baptism is the means by which you become attached to Christ and made partakers of his Death and Resurrection." We are not concerned to have a precise answer to subsequent questions about the status, in this life or in another, of the unbaptized. But we cannot help asserting that the right way for would-be Christians to become Christians is to be baptized into the Body of Christ.

The great difficulty of believing such a statement, even in its translated form, arises from the fact that since the time of Constantine and the calamity of his conversion, which made Christianity an established

and popular religion, we have had a condition of affairs unknown to the New Testament. We have had a semi-Christian Church. In the New Testament faith and Baptism are simply two sides of the same process. Everyone has both. The ascent of faith was met and crowned by the descent of grace, the descent of grace has been welcomed and incorporated by ascending faith. The two things are like the voice of the speaker and the hearing, understanding and memory of the audience, essential partners in a complete process. But to-day we have the baffling phenomena of multitudes of baptized persons who appear to be without or almost without faith, and some faithful persons who have never been baptized. The situation has come about through want of discrimination in the administering of Baptism, neglect of Christian education, and the consequent belief of some that the Sacrament is an empty form. But facts are facts, and until we can restore Baptism to the place and estimation which it had for the writers (and first readers) of the New Testament, our definition will have a ragged edge. For the present the Friends and some others, will remain as a mysterious but wholesome reminder that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, and that we must be careful about the use of terms like " absolutely necessary."

It is however the fact that the vast majority of those who profess themselves Christians have been baptized. And happily it has never been held that any of them

have been baptized into this or that denomination. It is indeed not possible to be baptized into any particular denomination. Christian Baptism, by whomsoever administered, admits into the Body of Christ. Accordingly, it is a very large and imposing fact, to begin with, that all baptized Christians have been made members of Christ's Body.[1] But it is also a fact that they are arranged—as a rule by accident of birth and family connection (an accident confirmed in adult life by varying degrees of acquiescence and approval) sometimes by deliberate emigration, and sometimes by that which seems hardly more than drifting—in different and separated Churches, Greek, Roman, Anglican and Protestant. If we concede at once that all these four types of Christianity have a right to exist, and have made good, within such limitations as are involved by isolation, their claim to contribute something of positive value to the common weal of Christendom, we are compelled to ask a question. What is their relation to one another and to the Body of Christ?

The issue between the Eastern Churches and the Church of England is comparatively simple. In the first place there is no question of the incorporation of either into other, or of both into one unit. Ethnic and geographical considerations require that the ideal be

[1] "We acknowledge all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and have been baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, as sharing with us membership in the universal Church of Christ, which is His Body." Lambeth Report, 1920, p. 26.

no more than free and full alliance within the universal Church. In the second place the road to such alliance is straightforward and well-defined. Eastern Christendom is passionately orthodox. If we can establish our orthodoxy in Eastern eyes, alliance, co-operation and complete inter-communion will gradually and certainly come to pass. Whatever suspicions are now entertained at Moscow, Athens, or Belgrade are largely the result of want of information. The Eastern theologians are evidently puzzled by what they hear of Anglican Modernism. They fear that the Church of England has already committed itself, or is now being committed by its liberal theologians, to positions incompatible with the Nicene Creed. It is of course conceivable that their suspicions are well founded. The East is not progressive. Anglican theologians, desiring for the most part to be orthodox, are yet very conscious of the need to re-interpret, to re-state, the ancient Faith. It may be that, by some spend-thrift dissipation on our part or some excess of conservatism on theirs, existing negotiations, which are full of promise and have already included many experimental acts of fellowship,[1] may break down. But at least this much is certain. The diplomacy will be conducted along theological lines. It is possible to predict with confidence, not indeed the outcome, but the

[1] e.g., An official delegation from the Œcumenical Patriarchate came to London in 1920 to confer with a Committee of the Lambeth Conference on the points which still need mutual explanations between the two Churches. See Lambeth Report, 1920, p. 11.

subject-matter of the "conversations" that will continue to be held.[1]

But Eastern Christendom is also deliberately non-Papal. So is the Church of England. But on the other hand the Church of England is Western, both geographically and psychologically. It might prove true that some new, modified form of Papalism, is among the positive contributions that the Roman Church has to make to the Christendom of the future. If it should, the Church of England must recognise it, and act accordingly. It is possible that the East would not recognise it. It might thus be found that the reunion of Western Christendom has deferred the hope of closer alliance with the East.

This leads at once to the subject of possible reunion with Rome. At the moment the hope is shadowy, the prospect seems unlikely, not only because the official voice of the Roman Church condemns Anglican Orders as invalid and dismisses the Church of England as an un-Catholic, state-created institution, or because the mere instinct of "No Popery" is still very strong among English-speaking people, but also because the real arguments for not accepting the Roman position are also very strong. Most educated people of to-day possess some appreciation of the immense complexity of the world of knowledge, a conviction that final truth has not yet been discovered, and some sort of

[1]For an account of some recent developments in the attitude taken by the East to English Orders, see the note appended to this chapter.

belief in democracy. To such, the voice of a Church which seems to be armed *cap-à-pie* against the "infection" of Modernism, which is organized under one visible monarch, which disdains for the most part to give reasons and repeats simply and unemotionally "This is the true Church," will have great difficulty in establishing its claim. Many of us think that the Papacy, which in the Middle Ages was undoubtedly the saviour of civilization, has had its day. Those who know history cannot fail to be aware that dogmas which once were believed by no one, and then for centuries were pious opinions, entertained by some and not by others in the Catholic Church, have now been defined at Rome as necessary parts of Christianity. Development is excellent. Belief in it proceeds from belief in the Holy Spirit. But we find it very hard to accept the conclusion that characteristics, acquired as the Vatican developments of 1854 and 1870 were acquired, have become structural and permanent and essential to salvation. We are not even greatly impressed by that to which Roman controversialists appeal as one of the leading merits of their cause, the solid, doubt-allaying, rest-securing certainty that belongs to those who are at peace with Rome. Of course it cannot be denied that Anglican theology is perplexed and perplexing. The teaching of Anglican pulpits varies, if not from A to Z, at least from A1 to C3. But does truth live in a pigeon-hole? The truth of revelation is not always neat and tidy The

wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. Simple solutions, transferred responsibility, the guarantees of experts, twilight sleep, will attract a great many lazy minds and some tired minds, but the crash, when it comes, will be resounding. A log-cabin may be draughty, but it is safer in an earthquake than a big hotel.

These are the real difficulties. The "No Popery" instinct may be worthless. It is in any case in part political. It has been affected by the accidents of English history. And even if many of our past grievances cannot be dismissed as accidental, it may be that we ought to forget them and make a fresh start. Insularity may easily be arrogant and un-Christian. If reason could consent, the instinct, suspicious or even hostile as it is, could be sublimated in the great cause of reunion.

But reason must see its way. Having resolved to cast out pride and prejudice, to forget the contemptuous language that Roman controversialists have sometimes used, and to repent of the abusive language that we have sometimes used ourselves, to abate the extravagances of our nationalism, and to face whatever humiliations may be necessary, we must still be met with reason before we can proceed. At present we are met with something like this—"Make your submission, and you will find that we shall treat you generously."[1] This sort of unconditional surrender

would involve a repudiation of past history, of fixed principle, and of future hopes for reunion elsewhere. It cannot be done.

And yet the Roman Church is so great, so sublime, so rich in spiritual gifts, that it must clearly play a leading part in the Christianity of the future. Let it play a leading, an inspiring, a predominant, anything short of a dictating part. If obscurantism could disappear, and be replaced by a genuine zeal for education, for the pursuit of truth at all costs! If infallibility could come to be known by its wiser and more really effective name of authority! If the Pope would consent to be for all of us the justly venerated Patriarch of the greatest of the apostolic sees! If the Catholic Faith, as defined at Rome, could lose some of its hard edges! If its more recent accretions could once more become detachable! If the policy of absorption could be replaced by a policy of co-operation! If reason could be met with reason! The remainder of Western Christendom would soon establish friendly and filial relations with the Church which shares with us Origen

[1] I have considered again and again the justice of this summary of the Roman attitude. But I cannot see how otherwise to word it. There are individual Roman Catholic theologians who seem to take a more liberal view, but their view is not, I think, approved in official circles. Recent essays from an orthodox Roman standpoint, like Father Walker's "The Problem of Reunion," which received the *imprimatur*, and Mr Bernard Holland's article "Rome and Anglicans," in the Hibbert Journal, July, 1922, are full of friendliness, but their policy is really one of fatherly absorption. The Bishops at Lambeth, both in 1908 and 1920, stated that "Any advance in this direction is at present barred by difficulties which we have not ourselves created, and which we cannot of ourselves remove." This seems to me to be, unhappily, the truth.

and Augustine, and can quote against us Bossuet and Fénélon, Saint Francis de Sales and the Curé d'Ars. We should be ready and willing to learn the lessons that Rome has to teach, lessons in the value of institutionalism and authority, in the shaping of devotion, in the building of character and in the cure of souls. A public demonstration on the largest scale, like the conditional ordination of all the English Clergy at the hands of Roman Bishops, would be a small price to pay for the healing of so old and sore a wound. If reason could be met with reason . . . .

What are the prospects of union with the Protestant denominations? Or, rather, to parry a retort which would have a certain logic, but would not be quite fair or friendly, let me say, " with those bodies of Christians who are accustomed freely to describe themselves as Protestant denominations." It is of course common knowledge that in the eyes or at any rate in much of the speech of a large part of Christendom the Anglican Communion is itself a Protestant denomination. And in the strict seventeenth-century sense of the word the Churches in communion with Canterbury are Protestant, that is, non-Papal. But the term, as commonly now used, has changed its meaning, and is not now an adequate description of our position. Our whole *raison d'être* in the matter of reunion is that we are in fact more reformed than Rome or the East, and more historic than the Nonconformists. It is indeed our

central position which begets the hope of playing a mediating part.

But before the question can be answered, it is necessary to place the other covenanting party. The Romans and Easterns are placed already. No one denies that they are within the Catholic Church. You may not like their customs or approve their teaching, but you cannot exclude them from Catholicism. Are Nonconformist Churches parts of the Catholic Church ? The occasional old bitter language, which went as near as it dared to the Beelzebub-charges of the Pharisees in the Gospels, is happily now never heard. There is much social intolerance, senseless and hateful, but with this we are not at the moment concerned. But there is an old answer, still sometimes given, that while vast numbers of individual Nonconformists are obviously Christians, it is nevertheless impossible to recognise their corporate existence. The reason alleged is that, with whatever provocation arising from the state of things in the Church of England in former days, it is the fact that they have gone out into schism. This verdict seems frankly untenable. The abuses which in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made their position intolerable are too notorious. Also, the Nonconformist Churches have abundantly established their right to exist and to be reckoned with. They exhibit a number of spiritual and moral excellences which Churchmen only wish that they could claim for their own society. We cannot simply shut our

eyes to them. Recognition is a thing at which, for the sake of truth and for our own sake, we can not afford to stumble.

But what is the degree of recognition? It is surely a question of degree. And if it be thought that the mention of recognition implies a hint of patronage,[1] let it be said at once that the whole question is a question of degree, all round. For this appears certain. Whereas we hear talk of valid and of in-valid or precarious sacraments, the fact is that no sacrament to-day is completely valid. No sacrament, wherever and however ministered, has behind it an undivided Christendom. There is no quite Catholic Church. The confidence which Churchmen feel in the sacraments that they receive proceeds from the conviction that they are sufficiently valid, not disturbingly precarious. Whence have they this conviction? The warrant to an Anglican congregation that what is being done is that which the whole Catholic Church desires to have done, is the fact that their minister has at some previous date received

[1] I do not see how to avoid suggesting that the Free Churches do await some kind of recognition at our hands. In some vital respects, like freedom from outside control (see later, p. 204) Free Churchmen would rightly require re-assuring before they finally consented to organic union. But over part of the ground, as far as increased occasional co-operation is concerned, it is obvious that they are ready. The obstacle at present is on our side. I am myself among the obstacle-makers, but I was able to appreciate the wistfulness with which a Free Church Minister once quoted in my hearing at a local conference the words of Lambeth, 1920, on Anglican relations with the Latin Communion, and referred them to Free Church relations with the Anglican Communion—"Any advance in this direction is at present barred by difficulties which we have not ourselves created, and which we cannot of ourselves remove."

episcopal laying-on of hands. A Bishop, a person unseen, unidentified except by deliberate enquiry, and perhaps now no longer living, is thus the person who brings in the larger air, who connects the local congregation with the larger world, with the world of history and geography, with the Church as it has been and as it is elsewhere. If I communicate at the Parish Church, the ordination which the celebrant has received connects me with Jerusalem and Antioch, with the Crusaders and Erasmus, with Rome and Moscow, and, I suggest, also with Geneva, Wittenburg and New England. The Bishop is the most representative kind of person that there is. He represents Christ, he represents the whole Church, in a larger, completer way than any other kind of person. The Bishop gives me the largest measure of security that I am participating in the life of the Catholic Church. This means that those can best make good their claim to Catholicity who are living (it is not a matter of government—most things, and the most important things, in Christian, as in ordinary, life, are outside the scope of government) who are living within the episcopal, that is, the apostolic organism.

What then do non-episcopalians lack ? What is the precise degree of recognition that the Church of England may, and if may, then must, accord to them ? It is much to be wished that the Archbishops would appoint a commission of the most able persons, scholars, evangelists and fair-minded laymen, to survey the whole question of recognition in its historical and theological

perspective. If any Anglican reader is disposed to reply that this would be futile, because the Nonconformists want full recognition, which we cannot give, the rejoinder must surely be, "But that amounts to saying that there are some questions which cannot be discussed. The fact is that there are no questions which cannot be discussed."

In the meantime, not knowing exactly what it is that the Free Churches lack, or rather not having studied sufficiently the question of what is involved in their lack of episcopacy, we can only answer by alluding to the published words of some of their own number.[1]

[1]The allusion is to the Second Interim Report of the sub-committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York's Committee and by representatives of the English Free Churches Commissions, in connection with the proposed World Conference on Faith and Order. The relevant words are:—"The proposals are offered not as a basis for immediate action, but for the sympathetic and generous consideration of all our Churches."

"The first fact which we agree to acknowledge is that the position of Episcopacy in the great part of Christendom as the recognised organ of the unity and continuity of the Church, is such that the members of the Episcopal Churches ought not to be expected to abandon it in assenting to any basis of reunion."

Among the points submitted for consideration as "The necessary conditions of any possibility of reunion" are

"(1) That continuity with the historic Episcopate should be effectively preserved."

"(2) That the acceptance of the fact of Episcopacy and not any theory as to its character should be all that is asked for."

I have quoted so far only what may be called the concessions of the Free Church Members of the sub-committee. On the other side there are these two statements (*a*) "The second fact which we agree to acknowledge is that there are a number of Christian Churches not accepting an Episcopal order which have been used by the Holy Spirit in the work of enlightening the world, converting sinners, and perfecting saints." This brings up the question of recognition, on which I have said already that further information is desired. But it must be faced. It is unfair to quote only "concessions" of Free Churchmen as if they stood alone.

But first let it here be said again that there is no suggestion of inviting the Nonconformist Churches to join the Church of England. The Bishops at Lambeth in 1920 made it quite clear that they had no design of absorbing non-Anglican Christians, only of joining in an essay towards that which has not existed since the sixteenth century, a Church which being itself an acknowledged part of Catholic Christendom, would contain all the British people. The suggestion is that both sides should learn to value and use the peculiar spiritual resources of the other. The principal spiritual resource of the Church of England awaiting utilisation by the Free Churches, is the virtue that proceeds from episcopacy. The Free Churches lack whatever is involved in the acknowledgment, made by the sub-committee in connection with the Faith and Order Commission, that the Church of the future must be episcopal.

In this connection one thing needs to be said boldly. The Bishop here spoken of is a purely spiritual person. There is no thought of Establishment, of the House of Lords, of a palace or any particular income or style of address. The Bishop is simply a person on whom a certain *charisma* has been conferred. It is a point of great importance. I do not otherwise see how the

(*b*) "That in order that the rights and responsibilities of the whole Christian community in the government of the Church may be adequately recognised, the Episcopate should re-assume a constitutional form, both as regards the method of the election of the bishop by the clergy and people, and the method of government after election." This essential point is considered in what immediately follows in the text above.

desired result can ever be secured. There is a real sense in which all Nonconformists are extreme "High Churchmen." They will not have what is sometimes called "Prelacy," i.e., the eighteenth-century type of the Episcopate, and they will not have State control. The passing of the Enabling Act has helped the situation, and if the method of appointing to office in the Church could be spiritualised, another step would have been gained. But I think that the cause of reunion requires what I myself desire in any case, though many Churchmen who are ardent for reunion are strongly opposed to it, namely, disestablishment. Anyhow, the spiritual *charisma* of the Bishop is the only thing that must at all costs be maintained.

Enthusiasts say sometimes, "If you wait till the Nonconformists become episcopal, you will wait for ever. If you recognise them now, you will find that they will become episcopal." It is a call to adventure, and has the inspiration of all such calls. But a trustee cannot always be as adventurous as he would like. The Catholic Churchman is a partner in a trustee-firm. He may not consent to a denial of anything that is positive, he may not prejudice the hope of larger ultimate reunion, he may not give away what does not belong only to himself. He may hold that it is within the competence of a particular Church to make experiments, he may be willing to face the risk of irregularities, while organic union is being secured, but he will not sever an existing link with the Catholic Church which

he regards as essential and some others are now beginning to regard as desirable. He may consent to the lowering of the Bank Rate, but not to the abolition of the Bank.

There are in existence various schemes for reunion by means of mutual conditional ordination and so forth. It is sometimes thought that all such schemes are really unworkable, because of the ambiguities which they involve. And it is the fact that many of the resolutions which have been signed by the members of Joint Conferences are forms of words skilfully (I mean of course, " ingeniously," not " disingenuously ") devised to secure verbal agreement among the signatories, but capable of different interpretations. For example, here are two sentences from the resolutions of an unofficial Joint Conference at Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1920. (*a*) " *This does not imply re-ordination.*" " No," says Canon X., " because re-ordination is a thing impossible." " No," say the Free Churchmen, " because our ministers have been ordained already." (*b*) " *Authorisation, as a means of ministering freely and fully in the Church of England, will naturally include the laying on of hands.*" " Yes," say the Free Churchmen, " quite so, of course, because that happens to be the Anglican method." " Yes," says the Church of England, " because that is the essential Catholic method."

Such ambiguity is serious, and may seem to impair the character of the proposed coalition. It is true that the formularies of the sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries were constantly ambiguous. Their framers deliberately made them so. The ambiguity was tolerated, because Churchmen then were not very independent. They accepted their churchmanship from above, from the Monarch, from the Council, from an Archbishop Laud, from an Act of Uniformity. But in our days the only possible kind of government is government by consent. The only possible way of union is the way of union by consent, union that rests on a genuine synthesis of believed truth, and has no element of camouflage.

Are the proposals damned because they contain an ambiguity? There are two possible defences of them. One is that many things in the Church of England already contain the same sort of ambiguity. Let us suppose, for example, that a young man of extreme neo-Catholic views is ordained priest by a Bishop whom he himself would privately describe as Erastian or Protestant. The young man does not believe that he is any the less a priest because of deficiencies which he recognises or suspects in the Bishop's own theology. Conversely, an Evangelical Vicar may sorrowfully but sincerely believe that the theology of a brother priest in the adjoining parish involves a view of the sacraments which is nothing else than magical. But on the occasion of one of the quarterly corporate Communions organized by the Rural Dean for the Clergy of the Deanery the good Evangelical willingly communicates at his neighbour's altar. Anyone can see

that there are many things in the Church of England which are taken by different people in very different senses. But the point is, they are taken. The situation is difficult, but not impossible. It may be that the difficulty of the proposed mutual conditional ordination would be no greater.

But even so two difficulties do not make a solution. And happily there is another and a better answer. The reconciliation here envisaged as conceivable is so unprecedented that our ordinary cut-and-dried theologies obviously cannot cope with it. We perceive at once that what would then happen would be some new thing, something " broader than the measures of man's mind." Therefore the second answer is that if both sides agree to have organic union, each side must be willing to contribute to the common weal, not any known quantity or measured store of grace, but *whatever in the providence of God it has to give.* If it be asked what precise gift or grace the Nonconformist Minister would receive at his ordination by the Bishop, the answer must be that we do not and cannot know. Provided that the whole enterprise is *bona fide,* that there is in all concerned Christian faith, repentance, charity, humility and hope, he will receive whatever he may need to be a priest of that renewed and enlarged dispensation of the love of God, which from the day of union will begin to be. The Anglican Minister likewise, receiving his new authorisation at the hands of Free Church representatives, will gain whatever God perceives him

still to need. It is only the divine versatility of Grace, the rich variety of the Creator's human handiwork, and the un-comprehending smallness of their minds, which make it necessary to speak of ambiguity. *Sub specie æternitatis*, viewed with the eyes of God, the controversies which exist and the ambiguities which threaten may be resolved. The peace of God passes man's understanding, but it does not pass the creating and reconciling power of the God of peace himself.

It will be noticed that the whole question is centred on the ministry. Laymen who have read thus far may wonder why the issue should apparently resolve itself into one of ordinations. But it is inevitable. The ministers are the nerve-centres of their churches. And yet the instinct of the layman is right after all. For the minister, more than any other person in the world, exists for the sake of others. As priest or teacher or pastor, he represents God to men. As the *persona* of his parish or congregation, he represents men to God and other men. And schemes of conditional ordination will be empty and even maleficent, unless the whole meaning of them is made to rest upon a proper doctrine of the Church. And it is here that the Lambeth Bishops in 1920 were so right. They say (p. 29) " We who send forth this appeal would say that, if the authorities of other Communions should so desire, we are persuaded that, *terms of union having been otherwise satisfactorily adjusted* [italics mine], Bishops and clergy of our Communion would willingly accept from those

authorities a form of commission or recognition which would commend our ministry to their congregations, as having its place in the one family life. . . . . It is our hope that the same motive would lead ministers who have not received it to accept a commission through episcopal ordination, as obtaining for them a ministry throughout the whole fellowship." Apart from this all schemes are mechanical. They would, by themselves, seem to suggest that it is adequate to infect Nonconformist ministers with the virus of episcopacy in a sort of magical way. Anything done without regard to the visible and organized unity of the whole Church is a quack remedy. It would make confusion worse confounded. But if bold and wise steps are taken towards organic unity, and if in the process everything of real value is conserved, the two parties will be absorbed in a comprehending, regenerating victory. The Church of the future will contain all that either of us, or any of us, stands for. And the more we assert that Nonconformists will contribute life and freedom, the greater the compliment that we pay to their Christian character. Our own insistence on the element of episcopacy is due to the fact that episcopacy is a positive thing, and that where it is present at all, it is ubiquitous. A Church cannot at the same time be episcopal and non-episcopal.

Illustrations are sometimes misleading. But let us suppose that the programme of the Guild of Health became very widely accepted. It might then be not

unpractical to suggest that the two professions of doctors and clergymen should be amalgamated. All doctors and all clergymen would then be priest-doctors or medical-missionaries. It would be fair, in the interests of the public, to insist that they should have both a medical and an ecclesiastical qualification.

The discussion of this subject has been dry and technical. It will seem to many an unfitting thing to hedge round the work of Christian evangelization and edification with provisos of this kind. But there is an analysis of every power, electricity, radium, and even spiritual power. And if the discussion had been even much more legal than it was, it might still be useful and, in its own connection, necessary. The marriage-law is a dull and soulless-seeming thing. Yet it is the unseen and, for the most part, unconsidered framework within which millions of happy lives are lived and guaranteed. Theories of episcopal orders, discussions of methods for securing possible defects in the status of Ministers, draft statutes for the union of separated Churches, sound very dreary. But they affect very closely a hope which all Christian men should have, the hope that the warfare of Christ will presently be waged much more effectually on a somewhat more united front.

In moments of quiet thought, at times of friendly conference with like-minded persons, the hope seems near to fruition. But in fact there is much to be done. The great mass of Christian people do not yet want

Christian unity enough. They do not believe that it matters very much. At the risk of being told that we are only exposing a domestic sordidness which should be decently ignored, those of us who care truly for that which is one of our Lord's great desires, must challenge universal attention to the rent, disordered state of what should be a seamless robe. On both sides, the leaders, to whose inspiration we naturally look for the statement of Christian principles, and the experts, on whose skill we naturally depend for the formulation of conditions, have made a brave beginning. But we, subalterns and the rank and file of the separated armies, are not yet converted. Most of us do not care very much, and it seems that Christian Reunion is one of the things which God will not give us until we are more nearly ready for it.

APPENDED NOTE

Recent developments in the attitude of the Eastern Churches to English Orders.

In 1922 were published translations of two very important documents, for which I am indebted to the "Church Times," September 1st and September 8th, 1922.

(*a*) The Patriarch of Constantinople addressed a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In it are contained the following words :

" The Holy Synod [of the Patriarchate of Constantinople] on this opportunity have taken under our Presidency the matter under consideration, and having examined it from every point of view has concluded that as before the Orthodox Church, the ordinations of the Anglican Episcopal confession of bishops, priests and deacons possess the same validity as those of the Roman, Old Catholic, and Armenian Churches possess, inasmuch as all essentials are found in them which are held indispensable from the Orthodox point of view for the recognition of the ' Charisma ' of the priesthood derived from Apostolic succession."

(*b*) This is only the opinion of one Synod. But the Patriarch has sent an Eucyclical to the Presidents of the Holy Orthodox Churches, in which he goes into greater detail, and asks for their considered judgment in the matter.

" Perceiving that an authoritative and canonical solution of this important question would greatly facilitate the desired union by removing one of the most serious obstacles that oppose the objective of reunion which is sought on either side and is dear to God, the committee brought under the judgment of our Holy Synod a special report treating scientifically the above-named question. Our Holy Synod studied this report of the committee in repeated sessions, and took note :

" 1. That the ordination of Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury by four bishops is a fact established by history.

" 2. That in this ordination and those subsequent to it there are found in their fullness those Orthodox and indispensable visible and sensible elements of valid Episcopal Ordination—namely, the Laying-on of Hands and the *Epiklesis* of the All-Holy Spirit, and also the purpose to transmit the *charisma* of the Episcopal Ministry.

" 3. That the Orthodox theologians who have scientifically examined the question have almost unanimously come to the same conclusion and have expressed themselves as accepting the validity of Anglican Ordinations."

" 4. That the practice in the Church affords no indication that the Orthodox Church has ever officially treated the validity of Anglican Orders as in doubt in such a way as would point to the re-ordination of the Anglican clergy being regarded as required in the case of the union of the two Churches.

" 5. That expressing this general mind of the Orthodox Church the most Holy Patriarchs at different periods, and other hierarchs of the East, when writing to the Archbishops of the Anglican Church, have been used to address them as ' Most Reverend Brother in Christ,' thus giving them a brotherly salutation :

"Our Holy Synod, therefore, came to an opinion accepting the validity of the Anglican priesthood, and has decided that its conclusion should be announced to the other Holy Orthodox Churches in order that occasion might be given them also to express their opinion, so that the mind of the Orthodox world on this important question might be known."

Since the above was written, it has to be added that the Jerusalem Patriarch and his Synod have considered the matter and have come to the same conclusion.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE BOWERING PRESS, PLYMOUTH